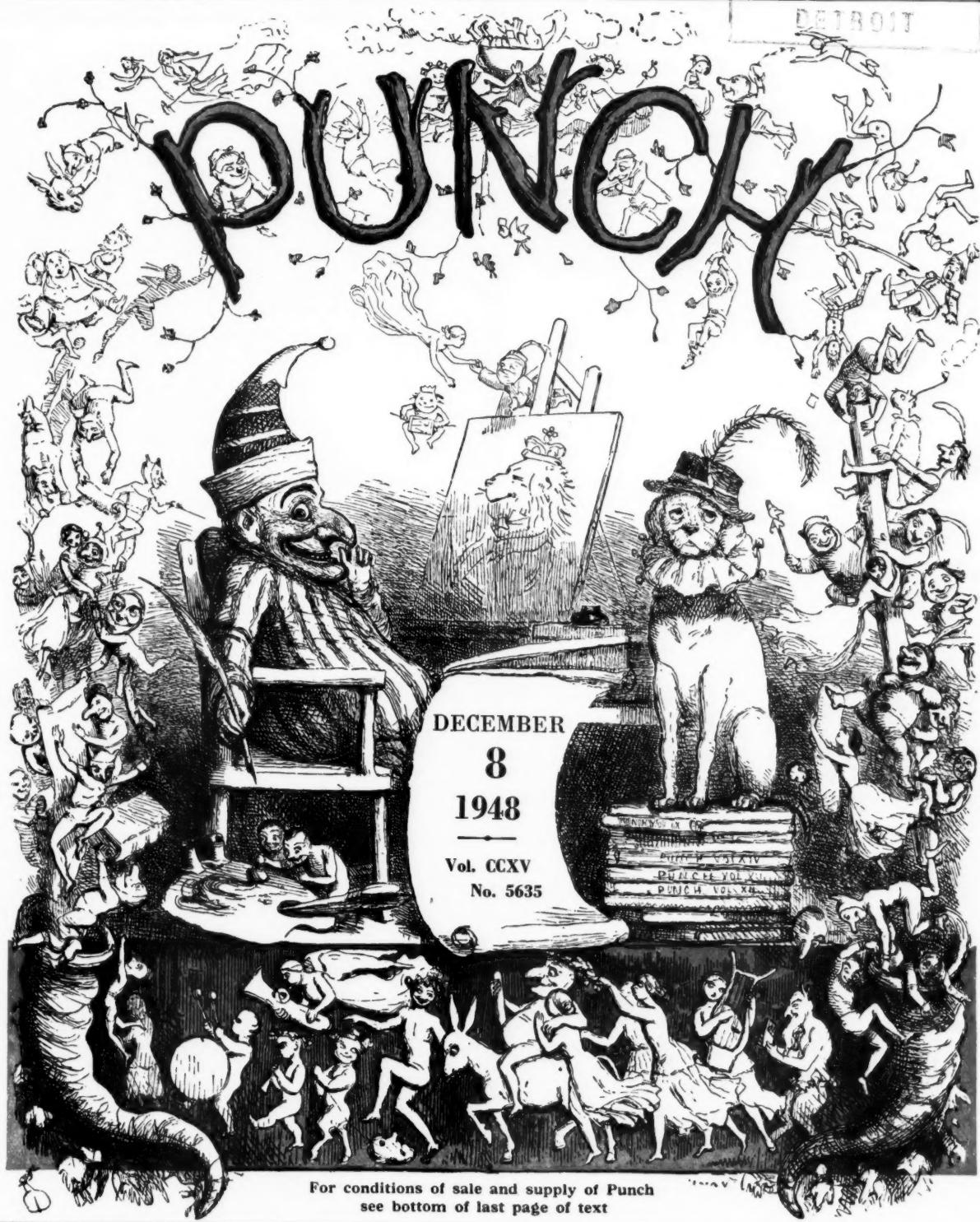


PERIODICAL

The NEW DUNLOP tyre steps up tyre performance

JAN - 3 1949

DETROIT



Fit "Triplex"—and be safe



IMPERIAL LEATHER

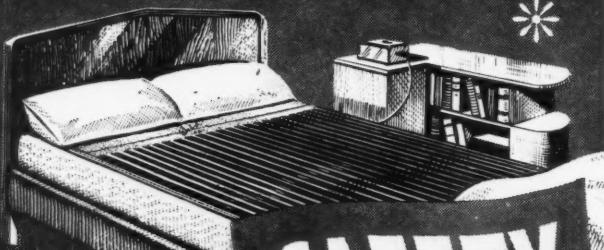
HAND-FINISHED
Toilet Soaps

All who are sensitive to the finer shades of quality delight in Cussons hand-finished Imperial Leather Toilet Soaps.



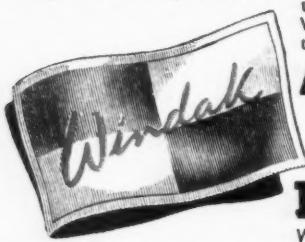
CUSSONS SONS & CO. LTD., 84 BROOK ST, GROSVENOR SQ, LONDON W.1

ALL-OVER-THE-BED-WARMTH



in absolute **SAFETY**

Those who would like the boon of an electric blanket but are deterred by fears of electricity need have no doubts with a Windak. There is no electrical connection between the blanket and the mains! There is a safety earth screen protection and you can sleep with the Windak "on"; thousands do — and love it. Put a Windak over the mattress and leave it there always ready for service.



ELECTRICALLY HEATED
Safety
BED BLANKET

Write for name of nearest stockist

WINDAK LTD., WOODSIDE, POYNTON, CHESHIRE

536



BY APPOINTMENT
SUPPLIERS OF GRAMOPHONES
ELECTRIC, TALKING,
TELEGRAPHIC APPARATUS
TO HIS MAJESTY THE KING

**ORDER NOW - in time
for Xmas**

What better gift for the family man or the music lover than this "H.M.V." radiogram... moderately priced—good for many years of delightful entertainment.



"**HIS MASTER'S VOICE**"
The Hallmark of Quality

Ask for "H.M.V." Model 1608.
Price 75 Gns. (Plus £34. 2. 6 tax).
5-valve 3 waveband, auto-radiogram
Twin loudspeakers. 8 new-type
push-buttons.

THE GRAMOPHONE COMPANY LIMITED, HAYES, MIDDLESEX

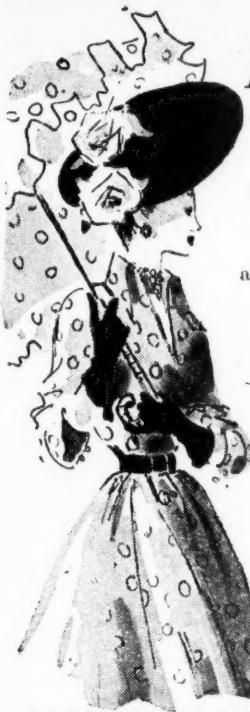
SOFT AND WARM

*Look out for a pair—and
count yourself in luck when you own these
Morland's real sheepskin boots. They'll
keep you cosy as a kitten.*



Morlands
THE FAMOUS GLASTONBURYS

Available also in Canada and the U.S.A.



Flair for fashion

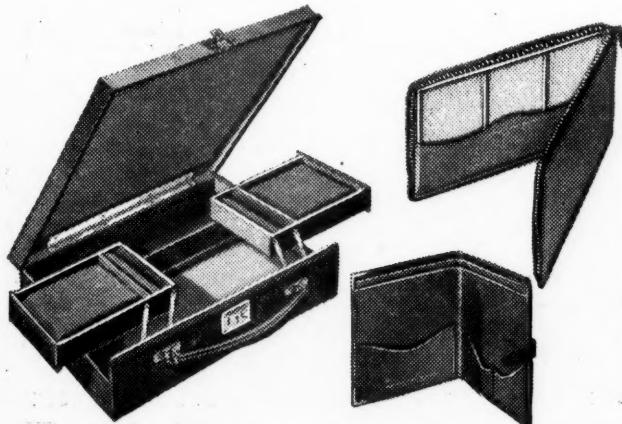
What is that quality which makes heads turn in the street . . . starts conversation among strangers?

Style, sophistication, charm—a certain 'aura' which surrounds one woman, leaving another in shadow . . . But elegance is not heaven-sent. It means hard work—a passion for perfection in every smallest detail.

★ When choosing a dress fabric it is not enough for it to be labelled 'crease-resisting.' No fabric is uncrushable, but all fabrics marked **TEBILIZED** resist and recover from creasing much as wool does naturally.

FABRICS MARKED

TEBILIZED
REGD
HAVE TESTED CREASE-RESISTANCE



Three excellent Christmas gifts

Leather has a character and fascination all its own and any one of the three choice pieces here offered is calculated to please both donor and recipient alike.

Left. 10" Winged Jewel Case lined velvet and beautifully finished throughout.

Pigskin £18.8.11

Also in SealSkin, Morocco and Crocodile at varying prices.

Right. Zip Pigskin Cigarette Case to hold 30 pieces without crushing.

£3.11.1

Centre. Note case with silver-gilt corners. Contains two pockets, card and stamp compartments and is available in

Pigskin £3.17.9
SealSkin £4. 4.3
Crocodile £9. 4.5

Finnigans

OF BOND STREET

Craftsmen in Leather since 1830

17-18 New Bond Street, London, W.I., and at Manchester, Camberley and Truro

FOR A MERRY
CHRISTMAS . . .

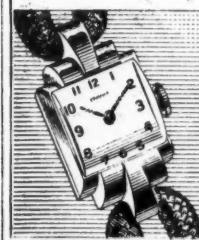


This fascinating Coty Perfume . . . gift of gifts for a thousand fragrant hours . . . in a superb satin-lined box with special Christmas card of greeting. This is one of many excellent gift ideas from the wide range of Coty presentations available at all the best shops everywhere and the Coty Salon, 3 New Bond St., W.I.

Coty
GIFTS
SHE WILL REMEMBER



To John
May your life be long
rich in happiness
and success



Lucky the one who gets a Crusader—the gift of a lifetime. Its elegant design and precision time-keeping make ownership a joy that never fades. The movement of every Crusader Watch is sealed and carries an "all-in" service-guarantee. Even if damaged by accident the sealed movement will be replaced, free of charge.

CHOOSE A

Crusader
PRECISION
Life-Timepiece

From high-class Jewellers only. A wide range of designs, for ladies and gentlemen, to cover every wish. In 9 ct. gold or stainless steel from £14 upwards. Write for address of your nearest Crusader Jeweller.

CRUSADER TIMEPIECES LTD., 8 SOUTH ST., PARK LANE,
LONDON, W.I.

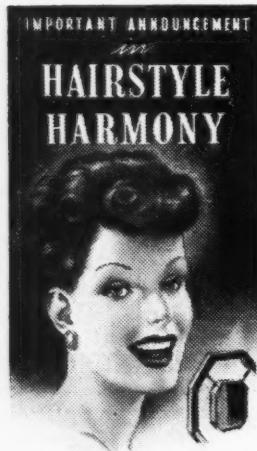


Fashion Sense

like Elaine's
means some expense
... lots of brains.
In all she buys
she's coupon-wise,
and knows,
when buying hose,
it's best
to invest
in Aristoc

Aristoc
FULLY FASHIONED

ARISTOCRAT OF STOCKINGS



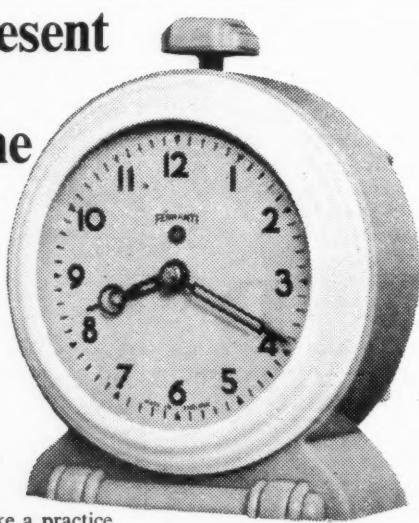
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4 COLOURS & 3 SIZES

The best "Bobby" "Kirbigrip" has come over the
[H]ill for ages. The famous Kirbigrip—selected
by fashionable women everywhere as the *soft* Hair-
grip—now available in 4 lovely colours and 3 sizes,
especially made for your hairstyle or hairstyle.
STANDARD choice of Golden blonde, Silver-
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or Brown. NEW SMALL CURL SIZE—in Black
or Brown.

The good tempered
KIRBIGRIP

Obtainable from all good Stores, made in England by
Kirby Beard & Co. Ltd. Birmingham & London

No present
like the
time



Have you any friends who make a practice of going to bed at night and getting up in the morning—or the other way round? If so, give them Ferranti electric alarm clocks this Christmas. We could give you a lot of reasons—the alarm can be set to go off every 24 hours without readjustment, they're good-looking, they're well-made, and there's no tick to disturb light sleepers. But better still, have a look at them and judge for yourself.



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*the Greatest Name in Cotton
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SHEETS · PILLOWCASES · TOWELS · FLANNELETTES · WINCETTES
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GIVE her a MIRLIP—the new French lipstick case with automatic mirror... No fuss, no fumbling. Crystal-clear view from chin to nose. Fits all standard-size lipsticks. At leading stores, chemists, beauty salons. In finely-chased peach golden metal, 21/- INCL TAX.



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THE HANDIEST, DANDIEST
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Thomas Minton, 1793

MINTON

*The World's Most
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China*

MINTONS LTD.
STOKE-UPON-TRENT
EST. 1793

Clayton's

IS THE NAME
TO BEAR IN MIND



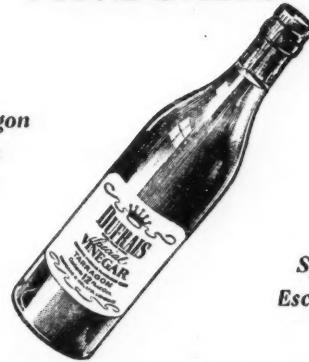
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and Table Waters

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Established 1838



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VINEGARS



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AND SOLD ONLY IN BOTTLE

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Lined with
REAL sheepskin

This "Exmoor" boot by Baily's is taken from our new range of high quality sheepskin-lined footwear which offers you Winter Warmth with a style of its own.

Baily's
Glastonbury

Our Trade Showrooms are at 68 Upper Thames Street, London, E.C.4
A. BAILY & COMPANY LIMITED, GLASTONBURY, SOMERSET



Sanatogen builds human vitality and happiness

They had a strength
that you can have



THE MEN AND WOMEN of the 'Golden Age' had a strength and vitality that nowadays is often gradually undermined by the strain of modern existence. You, too, can have what they had — simply by putting yourself on a regular course of 'Sanatogen'. For over 40 years hundreds of thousands of people have been building up their vitality with this splendid combination of two nerve-building foods (organic phosphorus and protein), which give you new energy, vitality and zest — a true return to the 'Golden Age' of life. At all chemists, price (including tax) 8/3d.

'SANATOGEN'
Regd. Trade Mark
A 'GENATOSAN' PRODUCT

Punch, December 8 1948

For a
warm welcome



SEAGERS GIN

is always welcome

RETAIL PRICE 32/- per bottle



Sunrays are energy—5,000 horse power per acre every minute. You too can get new energy from artificial sunshine. When you switch on a Hanovia sunlamp you release concentrated ultra-violet sunrays—energy in a form that glows your skin and vitalizes every cell of your body. That is how so many have regained health with artificial sunbaths. Ask your doctor, he knows Hanovia lamps. His certificate will enable you to buy the Sunlamp (Model IV)—now on sale, price £21. Send coupon below for booklet 'Sunshine means Life' and address of nearest dealer.

HANOVIA LTD
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London Showrooms:
3 Victoria St., S.W.1
Tel: WH1 3627

Please send your booklet

Name _____

Address _____



P17/111



THE MARK OF QUALITY

Quality
built the
renown of
the Havana

Quality must
be the test
of the
Jamaican Cigar



La Invicta

★ MADE AND SHIPPED BY HOUSES WITH THE FAMILY TRADITION OF FINE CIGARS

Special
Cabinet
Selection and
usual boxes.

C.M.2



Send a Harvey's Gift Case

The faultless choice.

Harvey's world-famous Wines packed in Cases and delivered to your friends before Christmas, provided that orders are received not later than December 10th. Here are two examples.

CASE "A"

1 bottle Golden Sherry - - - 20/-
1 bottle Tawny Port - - - 18/-
Total price (including carriage and packing) - - - - - 40/-

CASE "B"

1 bottle "Merienda" Sherry - 20/-
1 bottle "Club" Amontillado Sherry 20/-
1 bottle Tawny Port 18/-
Total price (including carriage and packing) - - - - - 60/-

We shall be happy to send you the full list of all our SPECIAL * CHRISTMAS CASES, ranging in price from 40/- to 112/-, on receipt of a postcard with your name and address.

Founded 1756. Wine Merchants to His Majesty The King

JOHN HARVEY & SONS LTD

5 Pipe Lane, Colston St., Bristol, 1 London Office: 40 King St., St. James's, S.W.1

GVS-32

TRY Angostura with RUM and Limejuice

also with

- All Cocktails
- Gin & Lime
- Fruit Drinks
- Hot Milk
- Sherry

Try Angostura with YOUR favourite drink and with those mentioned above and note the difference!

ANGOSTURA AROMATIC BITTERS

32 INTERNATIONAL AWARDS FOR MERIT

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WHY NOT GIVE BINOCULARS THIS CHRISTMAS?

All leading BRITISH MAKES SUPPLIED FROM STOCK

The following are selected from our large stocks of NEW AND SECONHAND GLASSES.

ROSS 'STEPTON' 8x30 £32. 19. 10

KERSHAW 'RENOWN' 7x30 £30. 0. 0

BARR & STROUD 'CF.18' 8x30 £24. 0. 0

WRAY 'MAGNIVU' 8x30 £14. 10. 6

All the above are centre focusing

and include leather cases

THEATRE GLASSES BY KERSHAW

BIJOU Wide Angle Glass £3. 0. 0. ELITE Pocket Glass £2. 18. 6. TIVOLI Bending Bar Glass £5. 0. 0. SPORTSMAN Spectacle Glass £4. 15. 0. PRICES INCLUDE LEATHER PURSES

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QUEEN ANNE SCOTCH WHISKY

RARE
IN QUALITY
EXQUISITE
IN STYLE



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Wine & Spirit Merchants
to H. M. The King

HILL THOMSON &
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EDINBURGH

Holders of Royal
Appointment to
successive Sovereigns since 1838

HILL THOMSON & CO. LTD.
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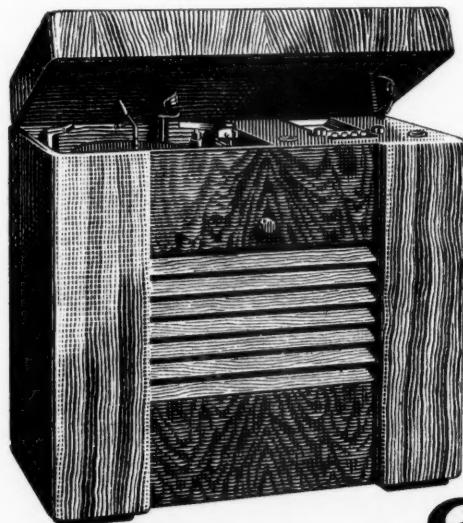


FOR EXPORT ONLY DURING 1948

Now flowing in ever-increasing numbers from the assembly lines to the markets of the world.

The Standard Motor Co. Ltd., Coventry.
London : Standard House, 37 Davies Street,
Grosvenor Square, W.I. Telephone: Mayfair 5011.

Standard Cars Standard Commercial Vehicles Ferguson Tractors Triumph Cars



THE G.E.C. AUTOMATIC RECORD-CHANGER RADIOPHONIC

The model for the connoisseur. It combines in one superb walnut cabinet a high quality 5-valve superhet all-wave radio receiver

with an automatic record-changer gramophone unit handling up to eight mixed 10-inch or 12-inch records at one playing.

G.E.C. Manufacturers of
RADIO AND TELEVISION

THE GENERAL ELECTRIC CO. LTD., MAGNET HOUSE, KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C.2

This is one of a wide range of fine leather gloves with warm linings for winter wear—a superb Xmas gift!



How to choose Gloves for a man

YOU have to know a thing or two to choose gloves for a man! This question of fit, for instance.

A man's glove must "give" to his hand if it is to fit snugly and look smart.

The secret lies in what is technically called "hidden fit," achieved by expert control of the natural stretch of the leather. This depends on craftsmanship. A highly-skilled cutter cuts each Dent's glove so as to ensure this "hidden fit." That is why Dent's gloves mould themselves so perfectly to a man's hand, yet never stretch out of shape.

Look for the Dent's label—your guarantee that the gift will be really acceptable. And may we remind you?—no coupons needed!

DENT'S GLOVES WORN BY DISCRIMINATING MEN

This Christmastide

Please Remember Music's Own Charity

The Musicians' Benevolent Fund is the ONLY Charity for musicians entirely supported by voluntary contributions that disburses thousands of pounds annually to unemployed, destitute, sick and aged professional musicians who are not members or contributors to its funds. Will you please help in this great work?

Please send a donation to-day to the Honorary Treasurer, Baroness Ravensdale.



**MUSICIANS'
BENEVOLENT FUND**

FOUNDED IN MEMORY OF GERVASE ELWES
ST. CECILIA'S HOUSE • 7 CARLOS PLACE • LONDON • W1



GIVE HIM A HAT
- and let him choose it!

Miniature Gift Hats with Gift
Tokens (exchangeable for any
Battersby Hat he chooses) from

Battersby
stockists

CVS 14

all shrewd judges smoke

Orlik
BRIAR PIPES

Every Orlik pipe is an individual work of art in the choice of the *briar*, in its weight and shape. To possess one, is to enjoy the constant satisfaction of owning the finest of its kind.

Also Orlik Lighters, Pouches & Leather Cigarette Cases.

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Established 1899.



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NICHOLSON
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(THE PUREST MADE)

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ESTD 1760
HAMILTY - BROTHERS LTD.

200-202, RECENT ST., LONDON, W.1
(OUR ONLY ADDRESS)

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'King's Own'

DRAWING PENCILS

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The
CUMBERLAND PENCIL CO.
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Good { COMPANY
WEATHER
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**Wine Hampers for
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Sherry always delicately blended
Champagne—the companion of festivities
Claret from the finest vineyards
Fine Brandy for a worthy occasion
Burgundies of selected vintage
Port, rich and mellow

Write, telephone or call for details of
Fortnum's Christmas wine boxes at :—

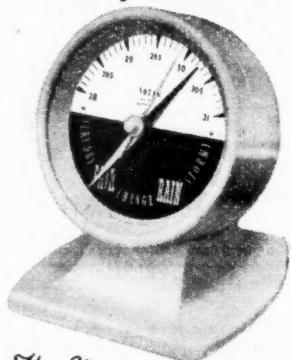
£15. 15. 0.	£11. 11. 0.
£7. 7. 0.	£6. 6. 0.
£5. 5. 0.	£3. 3. 0.

Carriage and packing free.
(Wine Department).

FORTNUM & MASON LTD., 181 PICCADILLY, LONDON, W.1 REGent 8040



**Wet or Fine?
— the gift for
every occasion**



The New
Rototherm
SOLAR
BAROMETER

Instantly sensitive to weather changes. Obtainable in ivory or black moulded case from most high class Stores, Opticians and Chemists. PRICE £3.3.0.

Rototherm
TEMPERATURE GAUGES

THE BRITISH ROTOTHERM CO. LTD.,
Merton Abbey, London, S.W.19

Pitchfords

{ and all in the
sterling area!

IT'S A GOOD SHIRT IF IT'S A

Radiac

FASHIONED TO FIT —
WOVEN TO WEAR

10



NECK SLOPE

The slope of the neck and the snug fit of neckband to collar is separately worked out for each shirt size. No gaps, sage or wrinkles. More collar comfort. Unfortunately supplies are still very limited.

McINTYRE, HOGG, MARSH & CO. LTD. Shirt Manufacturers for over 100 years


HOTEL Phoenicia
MALTA G.C.

For further information write, The Malta Hotels Co., Ltd., Public Relations Division, 34, Grosvenor St., London, W.1

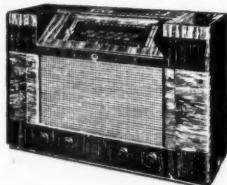
"Is that Arthur Askey in the Dining Room?"



"The clarity of reception on our new Mullard is absolutely amazing. I really did think for a moment Arthur Askey must be in the dining room—it's wonderful."

That's the beauty of these new Mullard receivers—they give such amazingly clear reception that it doesn't sound like radio at all. The actual broadcast might be taking place in your own home, it's so astonishingly vivid. Other features which

make these sets such a pleasure to own are world-wide range, simple controls and pleasing cabinet designs. Your local Mullard Dealer will be glad to demonstrate. Prices from £16.16.0d. to £26.10.0d. Purchase Tax extra.



HEAR A NEW



Mullard Radio —such a pleasure

MULLARD ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS LTD., CENTURY HOUSE, SHAFESBURY AVE., LONDON, W.C.3
(MR266D)

**"Whate'er he gives,
he gives the best"**

DR. JOHNSON

Draw no bow at a venture this Christmase; give the Gift Appropriate . . . La Tropical de Luxe Cigars. Famous over 70 years for their exquisite mildness and flavour, these finest Jamaican cigars will say 'Happy Christmas' again and again to the man you really want to please.

Obtainable in all the usual sizes: 5's, 10's, 25's and 50's.

LA TROPICAL DE LUXE
Finest Jamaican Cigars

Imported solely by Lambert & Butler of Drury Lane.

Branch of The Imperial Tobacco Company (of Great Britain & Ireland), Ltd. L.T.G.M.

MOVADO

WINNERS OF 165 FIRST AWARDS

CALENDAR WATCH



AN EXCEPTIONALLY INTERESTING WRIST-WATCH HAS ARRIVED IN OUR SHOWROOMS. "UP-TO-DATE" IN A VERY REAL SENSE, IT SHOWS AT A GLANCE THE MONTH, DATE IN THE MONTH, DAY OF THE WEEK, HOUR, MINUTE AND SECOND. MADE BY MOVADO, A FAMOUS NAME IN SWISS WATCHMAKING, IT IS AVAILABLE IN STAINLESS STEEL. PRICE £24.10.0.

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LONDON SHOWROOMS:
156-162 OXFORD ST., W.1. 2 QUEEN VICTORIA ST., E.C.4. 172 REGENT ST., W.1.
LIMITED
SHEFFIELD: SHOWROOMS, NORFOLK ST.
PARIS BIARRITZ BUENOS AIRES RIO DE JANEIRO JOHANNESBURG BOMBAY

ANNOUNCING

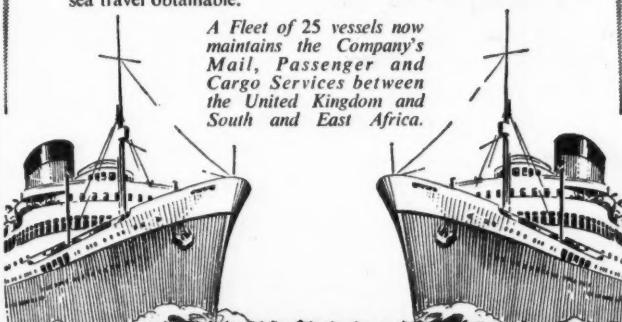
MAIDEN VOYAGE R.M.S. "Edinburgh Castle"

TO SOUTH AFRICA

On the 9th December this vessel of 28,705 gross tons, joins her sister ship "PRETORIA CASTLE" in the Mail Service to South Africa.

These two liners—the largest and most powerful vessels in the South African Trade—offer the highest standards of sea travel obtainable.

A Fleet of 25 vessels now maintains the Company's Mail, Passenger and Cargo Services between the United Kingdom and South and East Africa.



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Head Office: 3 FENCHURCH STREET, LONDON, E.C.3
Telephone: MANsion House 2550 Passenger Depts: MANsion House 9104

By Appointment  *McCvitie & Price Ltd.*

Biscuit Manufacturers to H.M. the King

*Makers of finest
quality biscuits*

McCvitie & Price

McCvitie & Price Limited • Edinburgh • London • Manchester



For some Huntin'

You never can tell if you'll have a kill,
For scent may fail in a sudden chill.



For others Shootin'

And even when shooting, until you begin,
You can never be certain your eye is in.



For many Fishin'

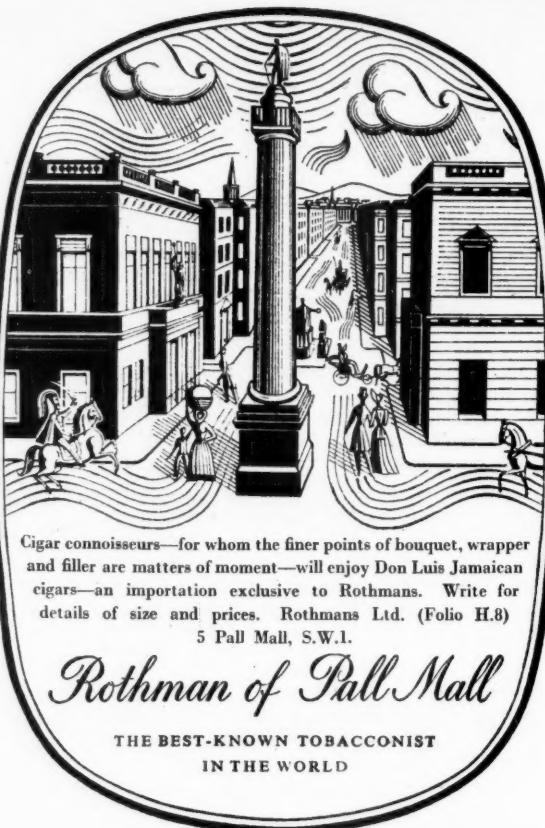
You never can tell, when you tie your flies,
If the weather is set for the fish to rise.

For all AUSTIN

But back on the highway you know where you are,
With an Austin, the really dependable car.



THE AUSTIN MOTOR CO LTD
LONGBRIDGE • BIRMINGHAM



Cigar connoisseurs—for whom the finer points of bouquet, wrapper and filler are matters of moment—will enjoy Don Luis Jamaican cigars—an importation exclusive to Rothmans. Write for details of size and prices. Rothmans Ltd. (Folio H.8)

5 Pall Mall, S.W.1.

Rothman of Pall Mall

THE BEST-KNOWN TOBACCONIST
IN THE WORLD



LANDMARK in the History of Whitbread's was the opening of a Bottling Stores in 1868 in Worship Street, Finsbury. Until the repeal of the Government's duty on glass, the bottling of beer had been economically impossible.

Once established, the popularity of bottled beer rapidly spread and the stores were moved in 1869 to their present site in Gray's Inn Road. This building had an interesting history, having been in turn a Bazaar, Headquarters of the Irvingites—a religious sect—and Madame Tussaud's Waxworks. In this last capacity concerts were given at which the audience were promised a variety of rich costumes, special decorations and an unequalled "coup d'œil"!

To-day, modernised and equipped with up-to-date plant, it is one of 33 similar branches all over the British Isles engaged in bottling and distributing Whitbread's beers.

Estd. 1762

WHITBREAD

Brewers of Ale and Stout



PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCXV No. 5635

December 8 1948

Charivaria

It is announced that America now has a twenty-four-inch gun. The news was made public only after it had been found impossible to fit a suppressor.

• • •
If British laundries are ever taken over by the Government the public will expect a guarantee of non-shrinking—bearing in mind what has happened to the British Empire.



Chance for "Pravda"
"MOUNTED POLICE FORCE
BACK DEMONSTRATORS."
"Evening News."

• • •
In Fleet Street many articles are prepared which never appear in the newspapers. It must be discouraging for journalists to write *direct* for salvage.

• • •
A herring grilled and mashed, with lemon juice added, is indistinguishable from a sardine, we are told. When sardines are plentiful and herrings scarce this recipe can be reversed.

• • •
An American boy of seven is head of a publishing firm specializing in books for children. A recent volume with a ready sale is *Amusing Sayings of Parents*.

• • •
A woman writer protests that it is cruel to send married soldiers overseas just before the festive season. She maintains that this posting-early-for-Christmas business can be overdone.

• • •
Just after Ipswich Town had scored the first goal in their Cup Tie with Aldershot, the match was postponed owing to fog. The official result, we understand, was Ipswich, 1; Visibility, nil.

Blow for Back-Seat Drivers

"Revealing care in detail, mention must be made of the mounting of the shock absorbers on the axle casing, instead of on the car frame, so as to damp down audible noises from the passengers."

"The Recorder."

• • •
"The worst type of caller," says a secretary, "is the arrogant individual who ignores your presence and walks straight into the boss's private office." Often without even saying who he thinks he is.



• • •
A French artist says his pet aversion in London is our heavy fogs. Londoners don't see much in them either.

• • •
From America comes the claim that a swimming instructor has succeeded in floating motionless on the water for three hours. In this country, of course, the Queen Elizabeth holds the record.

• • •
A correspondent who has only just heard that artificial rain can be produced by dropping crushed ice on clouds says that in this country it would be a mere work of super-irrigation.



Mr. PUNCH sends his commiserations to those who are now at this stage of their Christmas shopping. Many, of course, avoid this fashionable form of schizophrenia by the simplest means — they give subscriptions to PUNCH. PUNCH for a year is not only the most entertaining of gifts, but it will come as a reminder of you every week of the year. We send each recipient a Greetings Card with your name inscribed. You can arrange it either through your local newsagent; or direct through this office by posting names and addresses with your remittance (30/- Home; 34/- Canada; Elsewhere Abroad 36/6) to:— PUNCH, 10 Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4, England.

• • •
"(331) SWANS. Do swans fly across country? If so, how far?"

—Ignorant.

Yes. The distance depends on where they are going.—Ed., The S.F."

"The Scottish Farmer."

For long journeys, of course, they start farther away.

• • •
A suburbanite protests that some of the youths who sing carols outside his front door could be better employed. They could sing outside someone else's front door, for instance.

Men in the Moons

GREY wet wool pressed hard against the window pane, but shifting now and then so that one seemed to look into a long-neglected aquarium where a few dank weeds obscurely floated and perhaps a solitary bird would swim from side to side—it was after four full days of this secret and stifling existence that I bethought myself how, if it had not been for a whim of the second Roman Emperor, this month in which I write these words would have been known not as December but as Nero.

And now that, as I hope, all ears are pricked, all eyes open, and all mouths agape to take in what I mean, I shall descend to treat you to a little history.

The great Julius Cæsar, two years before he died, concerned himself among other tasks with a new flotation of the calendar, which was always having extra days put into it by the pontiffs in order to make it conform to the habits of the moon, and these days were put in by these men so that leases and terms of office might end to the advantage of their relations and friends. For in those far-off days of which I write, there was corruption in high places, and bribery, I am sorry to say, stalked unashamed through the land.

To reward himself, I suppose, for his labours (and I am hoping to write an imaginary conversation between Julius Caesar and his tame astronomer Sosigenes for the Third Programme of the B.B.C. "Why hast thou cut down poor little February, O Sausage-knees?") the dictator altered the title of the month that came after midsummer, and endowed it with his own, and Augustus the first emperor, not to be outmatched, did likewise. It is under the *egis* of Augustus, and in his honour, that so many little spades and pails are taken in so many crowded trains to the seaside, and it is to the memory of Augustus that so many little sandy socks—but stay, I wax sentimental.

The Emperor Tiberius, a man of sardonic humour and cynical mind, refused to have a month named after him, or even, by a stranger stroke of reticence, to be called a god.

He broke a sequence in the calendar, and denied himself the fun of changing September into Tiberius; had it not so been, Caligula would have certainly appropriated the month we now call October, and his two successors, I think, would have followed him. After that who knows? A rapid reading of Gibbon's well-known work will convince the most sceptical that no changes in the calendar could have provided sufficient months to be named after all the Emperors of Rome.

But enough would have been done already to make things difficult, especially for the poets of the Anglo-Saxon tongue. How strange, thus altered, do some of their luebrations roll off the assembly lines of the brain!

"Up from the meadows rich with corn
Clear in the cool Tiberian morn."

or

"The skies were no shade in particular,
The leaves they were crispèd and sere,
The leaves they were withering and sere,
It was night in the loathsome Caligula
Of my most immemorial year."

or

"Please have a gaudy
On the fifth day of Claudio
Gun powder treason and plot."

And finally no doubt—

"Their meetings made old Nero June,
Their every parting was to die."

It may be, it will be, objected by those who mingle their

historical studies with psychiatry that the man (or god) Caligula would have been more likely to call his month not after himself but after the name of that horse of his, whom he made consul and housed in a marble stable with an ivory stall, but whose name I do not know.

Lovers of horseflesh as we all are, I think we should have been even more delighted to call October *Bucephalus* or *Dobbinus*, or whatever it may have been, in honour of a great political animal who must have done much less harm to the world than many a politician destined to come after him. Nor is there anything in our own Constitution that I know of to prevent a horse from becoming Prime Minister.

But return for a moment to the great Julius. In order to set the calendar on its legs he made a bold decision. He decided to give the year 46 B.C. no fewer than four hundred and forty-five days, and then begin again with years and months of an ordinary size and a few leap years thrown in.

It would be tedious to tell how the pontiffs went wrong again. But what a year must 46 B.C. have been! For memories of feasts, for recollections of financial deals, for long debates in the Senate House, for tribunals that must have seemed to continue for weeks without end.

"No need to shop early for this *Saturnalia*," how many a Roman housewife must have said.

But the gods took their revenge. They held their hand through 45 B.C., but it was the augurs and the pontiffs, I think, who provided the weather of 44 B.C., especially on the evening of the fourteenth of March, one of the worst nights on record. On that night, and I am relying as much on Shakespeare as on local historians, there was almost everything except fog. The clouds dropped fire, ghosts squeaked and gibbered, and (very strangely I have always thought) a lioness whelped in the Forum. And the next day Cæsar died. But he had done his work. He had altered the calendar. He had given himself the month of July. And he still holds it. Only Augustus dared to follow his precedent. Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and the fiddler with the emerald in his eye failed to seize their opportunities. Yet how dark, even as the year darkens, became the colour of their sins.

The deeper the wall of obscurity about me, the more dreadful the fumes I breathe, the more I wonder about this, the more fascinating grows the phantasy of the might-have-been.

Written in North West London 1st Nov. 1948.

EVOE.

The First Loop

THE sailplane nods its nose upon the climb
And faintly moans, until, with just a clack,
The air-speed shows the towing cable's lack.
The dive is now begun and swift in time
Acceleration builds its gusty rhyme,
So when, with gentle pull, the stick comes back,
The little bus, the house, the farmyard track
Depart, and weight and clouds impress their prime.
Above the leading edge are shocking seen,
In wild obscenity of fear, the land
And lost horizon, as had never been
Before this flight, so that the shaky hand
Tugs hard and Earth reels down through clear wind-
screen;
The first of loops' the worst, you understand.



SPUDS AND THE MAN

"You'll be soldiering for six months more."
"Soldiering? That'll be a nice change."



"... and no sooner am I all nicely settled down in my usual job at Smith's Bazaar when along comes a chit from the Employment Exchange directing me to be an auxiliary postman."

On Restoring Psychic Equilibrium

A HOBBY-HORSE, as the reader knows, is a wickerwork or pasteboard horse fastened about the waist of one of the performers in a morris dance. Thus caparisoned the man dances about displaying various tricks and antics, such as running daggers through his cheeks. Very well. The word also means a stick with a horse's head, which children bestride, or used to bestride, what time they gallop to and fro crying out "Gee up!" or making a clippety-clop noise with their tongues. Children do not in the ordinary way run daggers through their cheeks, but their behaviour is in general close enough to that of the morris dancer to make the use of the same word for both pursuits unobjectionable. Hobby-horse also denotes a favourite occupation taken up for amusement "which is compared" (says my dictionary) "to the riding of a toy horse."

The Rev. Dr. Brewer, to whom one rarely appeals in vain, will have none of this. "Hobby-horse" in the sense of a favourite pursuit, he says flatly, is "a corruption of *hobby-hause* ('hawk-tossing'), a favourite diversion in the days of falconry." And to clinch the matter he adds, "The term has become confounded with the wicker hobby-horse . . . in a morris dance."

I do not want to take sides in this matter. But if hawk-tossing took up a lot of spare time in the Middle Ages, it is reasonable to suppose that some Earl's lady would often

complain to a friend "I never see my husband. He spends the whole day on his hobby-hause," and the other lady might well reply "Oh, my husband's hobby-hause is tapestry." Do you see what I mean? It is a sort of metaphorical transposition of terms, as with King Charles's head. Of course one isn't entirely clear just what hawk-tossing may be. It can hardly be another name for falconry, unless we are to understand Dr. Brewer to mean that falconry was a favourite pursuit in the days of falconry, which seems tautologous; and the mere tossing or throwing of hawks, in whatever direction, would quickly become monotonous. There must have been more in it than that. My reference books are silent on the point, however. There are frequent mentions of the hobby (*falco subbuteo*) and pages about terms used in falconry. (A wild hawk caught when adult is called a *haggard*; and it is interesting to reflect that if the tossing of these particular birds had ever caught on, a man might to this day be said to ride a haggard-horse instead of a hobby-horse, with all the openings for jocularity that that implies.) But I cannot find the word *hause* anywhere, except in the sense of a narrow neck or ridge between two heights, which takes us too far from the subject of the present essay.

But someone may say: Have we not travelled pretty far already? What has morris dancing or the tossing of

hawks to do with the restoration of psychic equilibrium? The objection appears to be well taken. But let me quote a few lines from a book published this week jointly by Odhams Press and Ernest Benn:

"It is in the use and withholding of their reserves that the great Commanders have generally excelled. After all, when once the last reserve has been thrown in, the Commander's part is played. If that does not win the battle, he has nothing else to give. The event must be left to luck and to the fighting troops."

If I tell you that these words were written by Mr. Winston Churchill there will be little or no sense of shock; but when I add that they form part of a book called *Painting as a Pastime*, will the reader throw up his hands and cry out that Mr. Churchill seems to be a long way from his lines? I believe not. I believe the reader will have confidence in his author and assume (as it turns out, rightly) that he is about to draw a comparison between the responsibilities of a Commander on the battlefield and those of a painter in front of his canvas.

I only ask for the same measure of indulgence—a moment's patience while I point out that "psychic equilibrium" is Mr. Churchill's own phrase for the desirable state of mind to which a busy and worried man may be restored by the pursuit of a hobby. Now, perhaps, it will be clear what we are up to: whether, I would rather say, this discourse is tending. Only a schoolboy, or the much over-praised writer Bacon, would begin an essay on "Restoring Psychic Equilibrium" with some such bald statement as "The restoration of psychic equilibrium can best be achieved by means of a hobby." The trained writer prefers to beat about the bush for a few paragraphs, taking

a swing meanwhile at any unusual bird or beast that may be flushed by his operations.

Nothing that has been said so far must be taken to imply that Mr. Churchill beats about the bush in this reprinted essay of his (it originally appeared as two separate essays in his book *Thoughts and Adventures*); the writing is, as one would expect from this great man, direct, vigorous, and so inspired with enthusiasm for its subject that the reader is hard put to it to refrain from rushing out instantly to buy oils and canvas for himself. Still less should it be supposed that because Mr. Churchill has a hobby-horse he has *ipso facto* anything in common with the extraordinary people who originated the word; he might conceivably toss a hawk, but he is the last person in the world to fasten a wickerwork horse about his waist and display various tricks and antics. No, my sole purpose has been to find an excuse for mentioning, as it were casually, this entrancing book, and to inform the reader that the text is supported—"illuminated" is a possible word—by eighteen colour reproductions of Mr. Churchill's paintings. Because "change is an essential element in diversion of all kinds," Mr. Churchill (on the evidence, at least, of these eighteen plates) does not portray war, or strife, or unrest, or indeed any movement more violent than the ripple of water or the undulation of trees.

General Eisenhower restores his psychic equilibrium, so my morning paper tells me, by cooking—particularly a vegetable soup which has a thousand-word recipe and takes a whole day to prepare. Others may philosophize about this, if they will. For myself, I don't care to say more than that, of the two war leaders, Mr. Churchill seems to me to toss the more attractive hawk.

H. F. E.

Curtains

THEY'VE gone yellow," said Edith indignantly.

"Who?" I asked. In the old days before we gave back India to the Indians a lot of our friends used to go out there pink and come back yellow, but so far as I knew none of our immediate circle had been serving under Pandit Nehru.

"The people upstairs," said Edith. "I don't mean *them*, of course, but their curtains in the front windows. When they moved in a month ago I don't mind confessing quite frankly that I did not like her face, but the man seemed a harmless type, and when they put up blue curtains to match ours I decided to give her the benefit of the doubt, but now she has taken them down and put up yellow ones, which just proves that I was right all the time. Nothing looks worse than a house with different-coloured curtains upstairs and down, because people naturally jump to the conclusion that it is divided into flats, and immediately the road begins to go down."

"But this house is divided into flats," I said.

"It doesn't matter its *being* divided into flats," said Edith, "it is *looking* as if it were divided into flats that

makes a road go down. The only thing I can do is to buy a set of yellow curtains to put up while the people upstairs keep to yellow, and then when they go blue again I can go blue again."

I pondered.

"If they stick to yellow and blue," I said, "it won't be so bad, but you will look pretty silly if you buy a set of yellow curtains and wake up tomorrow to find that the lady upstairs has gone pink or come out in stripes. Is it worth spending a small fortune on a set of yellow curtains until you find out whether the woman upstairs means to stick to yellow until she goes blue again?"

Personally I have never been what may be called curtain-conscious, and it would not worry me in the least if all the windows in the front of the house had curtains of different colours. The effect, as I pointed out to Edith, would be rather jolly in a drab world. But she went on brooding about the yellow curtains upstairs and even went so far as to get an estimate from a local firm. The sum involved sounded like an E.R.P. grant to one of the smaller European states, so Edith decided instead to haunt all the jumble sales and sales of work in the neighbour-

hood in the hope of finding a second-hand set that would do.

As jumble sales and sales of work are the main winter source of entertainment in Munton-on-Sea she had a busy time during the next few weeks, but it was not until she attended the Congregational Church Jumble Sale in aid of the Mission to Kugombaland that she had any luck. But there, to her delight and amazement, she found a complete set of curtains of approximately the right size for our two front windows, and of exactly the right shade of yellow. I had accompanied her to the sale, and between us we were able to raise the exorbitant price demanded. We carried the curtains home in triumph, and as I inserted my key in the front door the lady who lives upstairs joined us, also going in.

"I've been wanting to apologize to you," she said to Edith, "for spoiling the look of the front of the house with those dreadful yellow curtains, but my blue ones were all a few inches too long, and I sent them away to be altered. They came back this afternoon and you'll be glad to hear you won't see those yellow monstrosities again. I gave them to the sale in aid of the Kugomba Mission. . ." D. H. B.

At the Pictures

Call Northside 777—The Time of Your Life—Another Shore—The Voice of the Turtle

WE are told at the beginning that *Call Northside 777* (Director: HENRY HATHAWAY) is a true story and was filmed "wherever possible, in the actual locales" concerned. The fact

the most interesting point is the one that struck me about the last Hathaway film I saw (*Kiss of Death*): the absence of background music and the use of simple ordinary sounds, like the clatter of feet on wooden steps. Almost the only thing I regretted was Mr. STEWART's little propaganda speech at the end ("be thankful for living in a country where the authorities will correct an injustice," and so on). He always seems to get some such moralizing duty as this: they even found a spot for it in *Rope*.

There is a prefatory note, too, before *The Time of Your Life* (Director: H. C. POTTER), but this time one doesn't feel called on to believe it, for it declares with staggering effrontery that this is "a living part of life itself"—hardly an accurate description for a piece of WILLIAM SAROYAN's riotous fancy as magnified by Hollywood. The film sticks pretty close, I think, to the play; and though the sentimental sweetness of Saroyan-and-Hollywood can be a trifle overpowering, I enjoyed it. As there is practically no "plot" and the whole thing is essentially a string of turns by visitors to the San Francisco bar kept by Nick (WILLIAM BENDIX), the

film leans heavily on its "bit" players, and they are all good. JAMES BARTON as the roaring Westerner with the fantastic stories ("Ever fall in love with a midget weighing thirty-nine pounds?") has a great deal of the jam as far as written dialogue goes, but no one could put it over better and he is brilliantly funny. JAMES CAGNEY unexpectedly appears as that usually rather irritating character the all-wise, understanding onlooker, and this time even this character proves acceptable. To sum up, the skill and personality of the players mitigate

the whimsy; the result is a cheerful and cheering picture.

More whimsy in *Another Shore* (Director: CHARLES CRICHTON), a piece of rather hard-working Irish fun that contrives to be oddly entertaining. Saturated with Dublin charm and with several episodes only a touch away from that charade-like, all-friends-together mood that used to infest the average British film, this version of a novel by KENNETH REDDIN goes all out to give the effect of an Irish holiday, and in its way succeeds, for seventy minutes; the conscientiously absurd story about the man, obsessed with the South Seas, who schemed to be left the money to get there by the victim of an accident, proves—against all probability—to be strong enough to hold together a heap of odds and ends of character and almost documentary detail. The best character is STANLEY HOLLOWAY as a hard-drinking gentleman guarded by his chauffeur; a situation that may strike *Itma* listeners as familiar. This seems a young picture; I feel indulgent towards it.

The film of JOHN VAN DRUTEN's play *The Voice of the Turtle* (Director: IRVING RAPPER), though it uses a few more scenes than the play, makes no addition to its very simple and exiguous plot: it remains the uncomplicated love-story of an army sergeant and the young actress with whom he spends a week-end leave. The mood is set by the naive, unpredictable, romanticizing personality of the girl, and ELEANOR PARKER's very attractive performance is enough to make the whole film likable even without the continual amusing lines and the adroitly-handled "business."

R. M.



[Call Northside 777]

NAPOLEON AND HIS CORPORAL

Kelly	LEE J. COBB
P. J. McNeal	JAMES STEWART

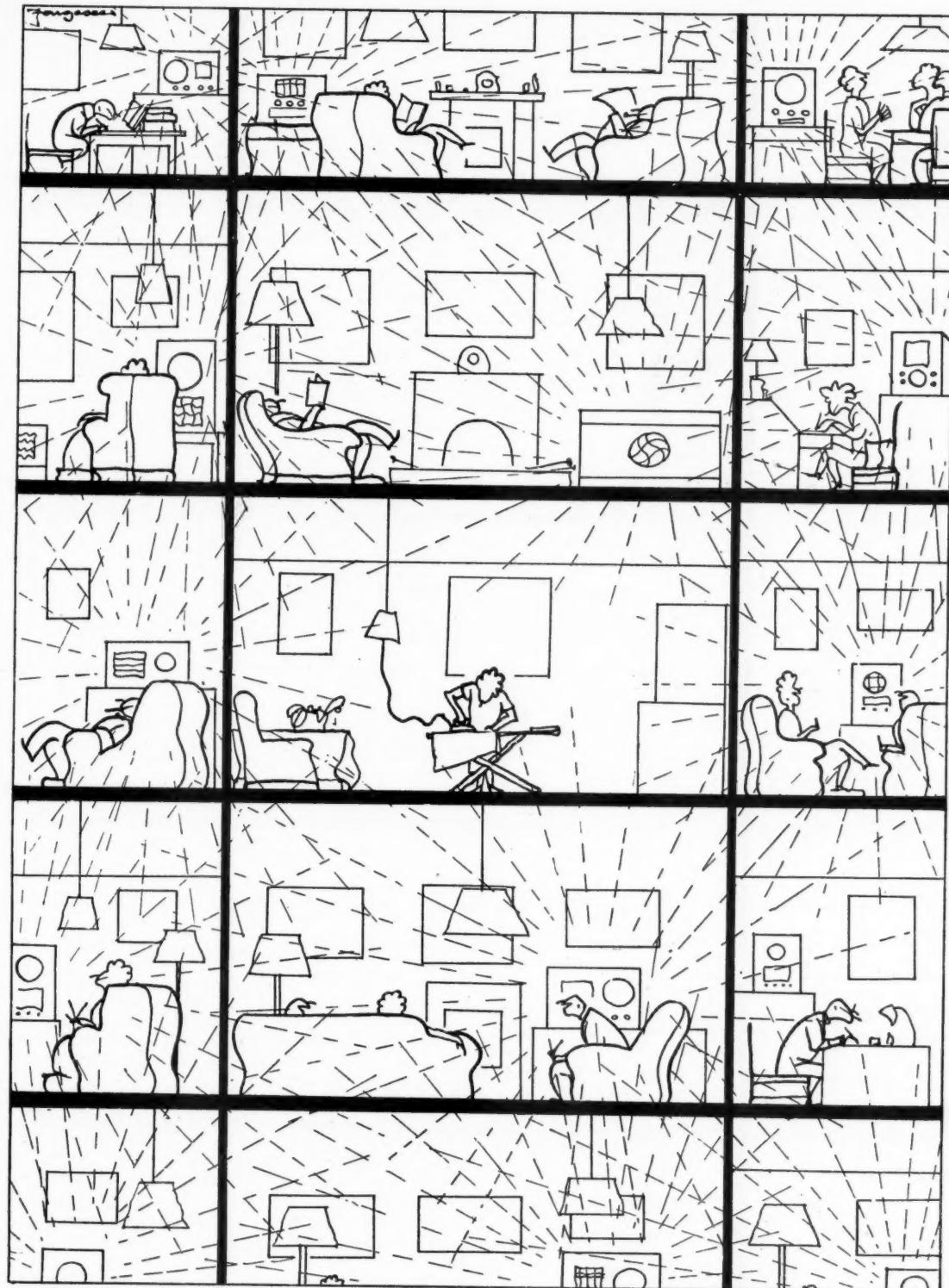
of its truth perhaps makes it more impressive in retrospect, the use of reality and the avoidance of studio polish give it more "bite," but it stands as a good, absorbing, dramatic story in itself. The key situation is that of a sceptical reporter, investigating in 1944 (purely for the story) the facts about a murder-trial in 1932, and gradually, against all inclination, coming to believe that the man who has for eleven years been in prison as the convicted murderer is innocent, and feeling impelled to fight for his release. It is all worked out admirably, from the murder itself to the tense few moments when everything hangs on the figure of a date in a developing photographic print; and JAMES STEWART very well shows the reporter's progress from an off-hand search for sensational "angles" to a consuming interest in the truth. Technically,



[The Time of Your Life]

WE ARE SUCH STUFF

Kitty Duval	JEANNE CAGNEY
Nick	WILLIAM BENDIX
Joe	JAMES CAGNEY



THE DISTURBER OF THE PEACE



"Sergeant Hanwortsby is here to talk to you on Road Safety, so no ink pellets or pea-shooting."

L'Art Nouveau

ARREST The reader's attention—
Two short initial lines will do this best,
Then court him with the regulated beat
Of say a couplet in iambic feet.
Now you have got him. You may take your time,
Practise your subtle art
With the most intricate invention—
There, did you see that rhyme,
The lines so far, so skilfully apart
To make him feel you'd forgotten all about it
And think the more of you because you'd not?—

Next have a shot
At the whole Mystery of the Internal Rhyme
Not a complete rhyme, more like an echo, like a chime,
But loud enough to let your mastery show
And set him seeking for others
Which when he discovers
(By the way, a near-rhyme like that
Should from time to time be pulled out of the hat
To prove Art's above mere convention.)
He'll think how infernally clever he is—which was
your intention.

Oh!
Aren't I a fool!
I've gone and left out—you can't *utter* without it,
It's the first elementary rule—
no caps!
it's the find of the century. Even a dunce
can see at a glance
that you're modern, advanced, authentic and deep;
how else would he know? You must keep

grinding and grinding at this
till you've got the technique
pat.

Now for the words;
perhaps
an example will not come amiss.
Let us say you are writing of birds—
you will speak
in terms taken straight from the factory—
the graphite beak,
the celluloid wings
the neck from a plastic mould;
not "ebony" or "ivory,"
such things
are old.

*Mechanization of inspiration is creation
Modernization of evocation is sublimation.*
Did you see that?
You'd never
think I could be so clever!
We jolted them right off the track—
rhyme, metre and print—
to wake them all up with a crack
just in case they were snoring;
readers are sometimes so boring.

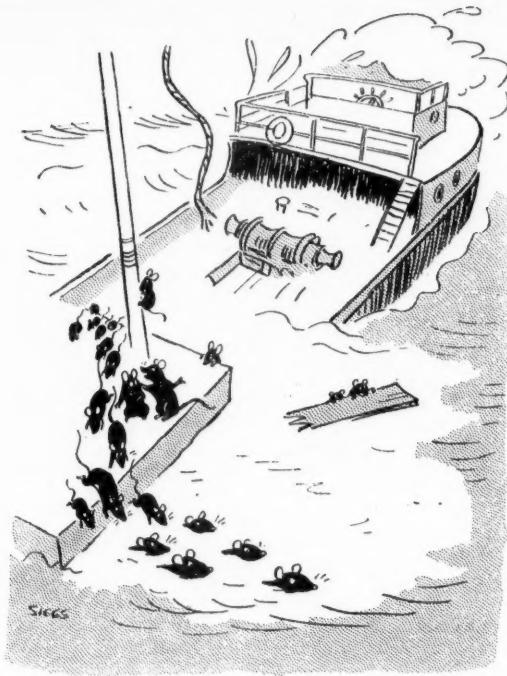
Just a final hint—
don't make your meaning too clear,
don't interfere
with the patient's imagination;
let him batter it out
till he thinks that he knows what the whole thing's
about,
then up he goes in his own estimation:
give him the flattery of co-operation
with so patently complex a mind.
In fact you *may* find
that it's safer to leave things like meaning severely
alone—
for where is the critic who'll slate what's entirely his
own?
Do you see?
Q.E.D.

JUSTIN.

H. J.'s Belles-Lettres

THIS Belle-Lettre is on the bright and wholesome topic of Light. To impress upon you the real importance of the subject I suggest this simple experiment: Imagine what the world would be like without light. If you do not reach the conclusion that it would be a remarkably dark world there must be an error in your working somewhere. Dash it all, it would be impossible to switch on a torch, hope for a moon, or rub two sticks together as a preliminary to a cheerful blaze. Indeed, however long you rubbed two sticks together you would never get a flame; the best you could hope for would be some kind of drab warmth, as in central heating.

Light is much used in poultry-farming. The theory, I suppose, is that hens are emotionally affected by the dawn and express this emotion by laying eggs. Therefore you can increase egg production by monkeying with the lights. I do not know whether the philistine cow can be stimulated in this way, but bulbs are clean contrary to fowls and perform best in the pitch darkness of cellars, as do mushrooms. The world is divided, in fact, into light-lovers and



"Gad, Sir! Women and children first!"

dark-lovers, the latter including directors and producers; the pursuit of the invisible and inaudible leads to much reclame in stage and film circles.

Light plays an important part in architecture. Many famous buildings would have looked quite different without windows, the Crystal Palace, for example. That much-travelled poet P. Bysshe Shelley compares life to a stained-glass dome, much to the advantage of each: I have never actually seen anything like this and I am not certain I should care to, but I did once dream of a railway station with a stained-glass roof and what this roof showed was scenes from the life of Sir Arthur Salter. About that time I also dreamed that Euston was the only Public School to publish its time-table. Half the mediæval glass left in England is in York, and this gives that attractive city a warm, glowish, parti-coloured, lambent, mellow character which is underlined by its hams, daffodils and dukes. As important as glass in architecture are chandeliers. These just blaze and blaze, usually upon men wearing decorations and women wafting fans at them. George IV was a rare one for a chandelier, and his Pavilion at Brighton was lighted by great fountains of candles illuminating the food, musicians and general chinoiserie—and also of course the First Gentleman of Europe himself.

Older readers will probably be taken right back to their childhood by the mention of rushlights. These were grown by streams, dipped in fat and snuffed vigorously, whereas to-day nothing is much less home-made than illumination. Museums which cannot afford such expensive items as mummies and Greek statues often contain objects in cheap-looking metal which are alleged to have held or snuffed rushlights. They also contain numbers of indistinguishable flint arrowheads, frequently presented by a local doctor.

If you mix sulphur and chlorate of potash and stir

briskly you will not be reading the rest of this *Belle-Lettre*. I mention this to show what chemistry can do in the way of flashes, bangs and other vivacious phenomena. Nor is physics far behind, with its cathode-ray tubes and bunsen burners, though these might be counted as a gift from physics to chemistry. Biology lags rather, being able to offer only such sidelines as glow-worms; but astronomy is very dependent on light, the light, which as Wordsworth remarked, never was on sea or land, being of course in the sky. A perplexing modern discovery is light you cannot see but are told will do you good because ultra-violet lamps, sun-lounges and similar luxuries have gone down well with rats and it is assumed that the human race has much in common with these rodents.

Somehow light has got itself associated with all that is good, true, beautiful and entertaining (as in the Light programme), while evil, error and ugliness (but not the Third programme) are associated with the dark. This seems rather unfair. After all, Satan the sable never fails to brighten up any piece of literature in which he appears, we are grateful to be able to grow ground-nuts in the Dark Continent, the usual clothes of such respected citizens as clergymen, doctors and bankers are black as soot, and we owe whole sonnets to the Dark Lady. At Oxford you were not considered really eligible for the examinations they held there from time to time unless you were dressed in sombre garb—or "subfusc" as that classically-minded University enjoyed calling it. Coal is black and it is almost impossible to open a newspaper without seeing it praised in the highest terms, far higher than those used for diamonds, which are made equally of carbon but just glitter with light. Then take Night. It is when the sun has moved on to America that learned and original minds work their best, distilling from the dark such prestige products as poems, theories of metaphysics and new kinds of logarithm.

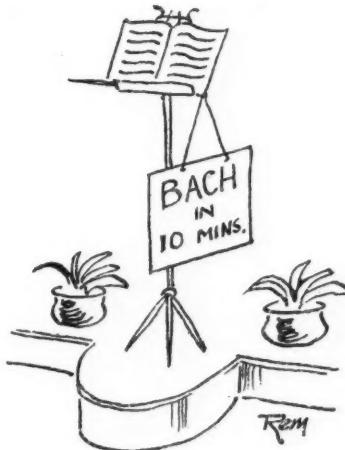
Lastly, on the theme of love-lights and their fair light-houses I have composed a Courtly Compliment, *q.v., infra:*

TO CHLORINDA, WITH A JAR OF PRESERVES

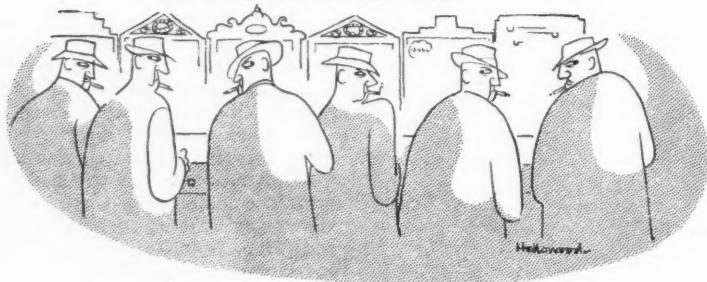
Chlorinda's gaze the burning-glass outburns
And from thermometers great kudos earns.
Her glances keen my passions all arouse
And I, poor moth, would willing be her spouse.

Chorus

Oh, darkeys, how my heart grows weary,
Far from de old folks at home.



DO NOT TILT



BEFORE the war it was generally accepted, I think, by statisticians, insurance companies and other interested parties that barmen as a class die younger than the members of any other trade or profession. Not barmaids, notice, only barmen. Well, this sad fact may still be generally accepted to-day, in spite of shorter hours, weaker beer and scarcer Scotch, but I should imagine that the Fun Fair attendants—in London, anyway—now run the barmen pretty close. I make no apology for striking this gloomy note so early in these proceedings, for I am not too happy this morning about my own expectation of life. My health seems to have deteriorated sharply since I set forth a few days ago on a mad round of the Amusement Arcades, Sports Gardens, Pleasure Dromes and Fun Fairs of the Central London area. The damage is not only to my feet. I am weak. I move sluggishly with upwards of five shillings-worth of coppers impeding and chafing my every step. My

coin-stained fingers from the satchel slung around his neck and pressed them against his temples, trying to ease the scalp away from his aching cranium. His face was colourless except for the grey stubble on his chin, and there were concentric circles of pouched flesh under his eyes. Mr. Preston is an attendant at an Oxford Street Arcade. His duties are manifold. He is charged between the hours of eleven A.M. and midnight with the care and maintenance of the machines, the maintenance of law, order and decency on the premises, the maintenance of a steady supply of change for the customers, and the maintenance of an atmosphere of excitement, hope and goodwill.

The pin-tables are his least worry. Their playing surfaces may appear extremely complicated, intricate panels of coloured lights, springs, traps, bells and buzzers (everything, in fact, except pins), but their underlying mechanics are as simple and foolproof as the engineers of Chicago can make them. A bent or dud coin may cause slight trouble. Then Mr. Preston unlocks the machine, makes a swift diagnosis and a trifling adjustment, and play is resumed. More often he is summoned to the machine's rescue by sounds of violence. A customer becomes discouraged by repeated failure and tries to hammer, rattle or kick the machine into submission. A firm hand and an authoritative voice see Mr. Preston through these crises.

Mr. Preston's five months in the Arcade have left him with no faith whatever in the fundamental nobleness of man. "You'd never credit the tricks they gets up to," he said. "They'd cheat theirselves soon as look."

"They tilt the machines, do they?" I said, nodding to the "No Tilting" notice behind the "Sky Pilot Game of Skill" machine.

"Tilt! Why they'd turn 'em inside out if you'd let 'em. No, the usual dodge is sayin' they put cash in when they 'asn't. Old codgers, an' all!"

"What do you do about it?"

"Put another dib* in for 'em. No use 'avin' oughterations—bad for biz. Same with them as claims they won when they 'asn't, nothin' of the sort, see. Come up to me an' says they got eleven thousand five hundred up, but the machine only shows seven thousand odd, an' what abart it. Usually work in gangs, them do. Know 'em anywhere."

"What are the prizes?" I asked.

"Two ciggers on the tables. Take the Digger, the crane—a feller'll spend five bob as cheerful as kiss 'is 'and, an' then quite sudden 'e's turned nasty an' blastfurious. It's a blankety swindle, 'e says. Trying to make out as 'e's been

eyes smart from an excess of tobacco-smoke and the strain of trying to miss nothing of What the Butler Saw. My hands tremble from too much fidgeting with the Electric Travelling Crane. And my head is splitting.

Mr. Preston's head was splitting, too, when I interviewed him the other night midway between the shooting-range and the Punch-a-Bag. From time to time he withdrew his



* Penny.

diddled. Says 'e's 'ad a silver lighter or twenty Players right in the grab an' we've switched the electric off to stop 'im gettin' it."

"What then?"

"Nothin' much. I seen 'em standin' there for hours just glowerin' at the machine an' tellin' everybody it's a dirty swindle. But we don't have much trouble really. Well, not often."

With the exception of the lunch-time regulars the customers of the Fun Fair, I discovered, are nearly all males under forty. The regulars are "business-men" with flaccid cheeks and fat wallets. They usually play the same machine day after day, manipulating the levers with easy confidence and flourish. Their eyes are screwed up tight against the smoke of their cigarettes and they betray no emotion, win or lose. The steady progress of the chromium ball through its interminable and dull routine has a narcotic influence on them. They stand like dejected robots before a battery of comptometers. It is a picture of utter futility. And over the door in bright letters are the words "Fun Fair."

At the moment the Arcades are doing badly. Like the pubs, they are finding that the post-war flow of easy money is running dry, and some of them, I am told, are actually operating at a loss. Their overhead expenses are heavy. The halls are open for at least twelve hours a day and all their services must be maintained in full running order so that advantage can be taken of the three or four really profitable peak-hours which develop during the session. Apart from the lunch-hour these daily booms are unpredictable. They may occur at any time between five o'clock and midnight, according to the weather, the news, the rival attractions on the wireless and round the corner, and the vicissitudes of crowd psychology. The arcade must be situated in a main shopping and entertainments district, so that the rent of the narrow front and long, usually dog-leg back premises is high. The façade must be as bright and

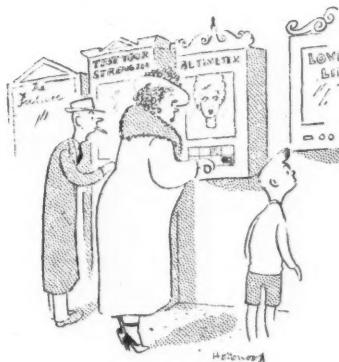


as noisy as the regulations allow, and the first perspective view from the street must be one of cheerfulness, warmth and animation, so the entrance is packed with cranes and the most popular of the pin-tables. All is glitter and harsh colour: the juke-box maintains its steady rhythmic jazzy bleat, and Mr. Preston and his weary colleagues

in their off-white coats stand ready to minister to man and machine.

Beyond the façade the hall rapidly loses its sparkle. The long row of pin-tables, wall machines, mutascopes ("Night in Montmartre," "The Chase," "Strip-Queen"), Love Meters, mechanical palm-readers, and the rest take on a forlorn and vaguely illicit look in the stale, misty atmosphere. And farther back still the acrid smell of electricity emerges from a cellar full of racing Dodgem cars. We have come a long way from the breezy fair-ground with its shies, side-shows, hobby-horses and caravans.

The Fun Fair is of course an import from America. All the machines are American, the creations of the great



amusement moguls of Chicago and New York. In fact the coin-in-the-slot industry is almost an American monopoly. In a land where everything is plentiful except labour, labour-saving and personal-service-saving devices are richly rewarding. The juke-box, pin-table and fruit-machine, like those other institutions the ice-box and the flivver, are as much the products of the American soil as cotton and tobacco. About the only menial service the Americans have not yet mechanized is the shoe-shine, and it so happens that the only labourer not in short supply is the young unskilled male Negro. Unfortunately, the pin-tables do not transplant very successfully. In their native habitat—the village drug-store, the hotel lobby* or the arcades of Times Square—their flashy splendour becomes almost protective colouring. In Britain, whether they find a home in the pull-in café of the arterial roads, the pub, the railway station or the Fun Fair, they appear somehow as interlopers, as attractions ousting the traditional darts, skittles, dominoes and shove-ha'penny only by their vulgar display and novelty.

The electric travelling crane at the Coventry Street arcade muleted me of three shillings before I finally decided that the packet of cigarettes was as inaccessible as the powder compact the watch and indeed the shabby packet of sweets. Not another penny of mine shall pass into their coffers. I may possibly pop in there to-night just to look round and perhaps drop a hint or two to the management, but it will only be for a minute.

HOD.

* Nothing is much more surprising to the English visitor to America than the rows of gleaming pin-tables in the hotel lobbies and the rows of American business-men in their neat suits and colourful ties standing in complete mastery at the controls.



"Delightfully refreshing to drop into the local after a hard day at the Ministry . . ."

To the Sun

LORD of the skies, in homage I address you
And, as in Milton, "add thy name, O Sun"
With the slight change that I propose to bless you
(Satan did not) for all the good you've done.

Through a long autumn, generally speaking,
You have displayed most admirable form;
E'en the rheumatic found that they were creaking
Less, and for once were tolerably warm.

Now that we pass unwillingly to winter
Hide not, I beg you, your "celestial face,"
Shrink not, as shrinks the optimistic sprinter
Who, much embittered, hasn't got a place.

Shine, Orb of Day, and while you are about it
Let not the rude winds frolic to our cost;
North wind or East, we'll gladly do without it,
And, need I add, the same applies to frost.

Nor, as a fact, would I omit the snow, too.
This is no time for foolery like these.
Take all the lot and tell them where to go to.
Why should we shiver, wherefore must we freeze?

This, you may argue, can't be done by shining.
Never mind that. Such details we ignore.
If there be clouds, provide the silver lining;
If there be cold, go at it all the more. DUM-DUM.



A DIFFICULT CUSTOMER

MONDAY, November 29th.—Mr. CLEMENT ATTLEE, the Prime Minister, half-promised a Royal Commission on Gambling—but not until early in the New Year. Just about this time the House will be engaged in its draw for the right to bring in Private Members' Bills—but that gamble, no doubt, will be left free of any inquiry. After all, few Members get any prize out of the bag, except a lot of hard work and a measure of disappointment.

The more forward-looking (or is it optimistic?) Members are already taking an active interest in the new House of Commons, now rising fast under the skilled hands of the builders. There were several questions about it to-day, and the House heard with somewhat mixed feelings the announcement that both sound wireless and television receivers are to be provided for the entertainment and instruction of Members, together with facilities for the showing of films. Mr. ANTHONY EDEN asked, rather forlornly, that the House itself should be "spared" loud-speakers, but Mr. CHARLES KEY, the Minister of Works, was non-committal. The Minister earned a cheer, however, by announcing that those faithful and tireless attendants on Parliament, the Civil Service, are to have (for the first time) adequate accommodation in the new building.

Mr. JOHN STRACHEY, Minister of Food, made his weekly visit to the House to answer questions, and he was asked by Mr. BALDWIN what was a "long ton." Mr. STRACHEY looked non-plussed for a moment, then, the light of knowledge coming suddenly to him, he explained it all urbanely. In the mysterious realms of commerce, he said, there were "short tons" and "long tons"—the "long tons" were the longer of the two. While Members were thinking that one out, the Minister skipped nimbly to the next question.

He stunned the House in another way by importing the word "throughput" into the Parliamentary vocabulary. Apparently it is something to do with milk, since it was used in reference to the activities of a milk-processing factory.

Then there was a spot of bother about the Government's plan to increase the size of the Coal Board and to give it new powers. The Government gave the impression that the whole future of the industry depended on the plan, but Mr. BRENDAN BRACKEN (as he sometimes does) took

Impressions of Parliament

Monday, November 29th.—House of Commons: Review of the Coal Industry.

Tuesday, November 30th.—House of Lords: Scottish Justice. House of Commons: Civil Defence Again.

Wednesday, December 1st.—House of Commons: Mr. Churchill is Called Up.

Thursday, December 2nd.—House of Commons: Fill-up Material.

precisely the opposite view and complained that an increase in the officer-class in the coal industry would make it more top-heavy than ever. Moreover, said he, really successful mining was difficult in a suite of offices in Central London. Nor could an increase in officials really be any substitute for an increase of coal-getting by the hard-worked but over-officered miners.

The argument proceeded on these lines for several hours, and at the end Mr. HUGH GAITSKELL, the Minister of Fuel, with that cheerfully persuasive air the House finds so attractive and difficult to combat, repeated firmly that the plans were essential, moderate and practical. Whereupon, with the

—E.S.



Impressions of Parliamentarians

63. Mr. Ellis Smith (Stoke-on-Trent)

Government and Opposition Whips shepherding their flocks into the correct lobbies, the plans were approved by a substantial majority.

TUESDAY, November 30th.—The Conservative benches had an overcrowded appearance almost as soon as the House of Commons assembled. Members clung eagerly to small spaces and the Front bench was full except for one conspicuously empty seat opposite the Dispatch Box on the table.

Question-time went forward uneventfully, and Mrs. LEAH MANNING rose

behind Ministers to ask one of those politely persistent questions in which she specializes. She had got as far as "May I ask the Minister—" when a roar of Conservative cheering drowned her voice. As she looked around, a little startled, the roar grew louder and spread to the Government benches.

Then she stopped and a broad smile spread over her face. For stumping stockily into the Chamber was Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL, whose seventy-fourth birthday accounted for the cheers. With bows all round—and a sudden jerk of the arm which suggested that he had only just in time stopped himself from giving the "Victory" sign—Mr. CHURCHILL sat down smilingly and the normal proceedings were resumed.

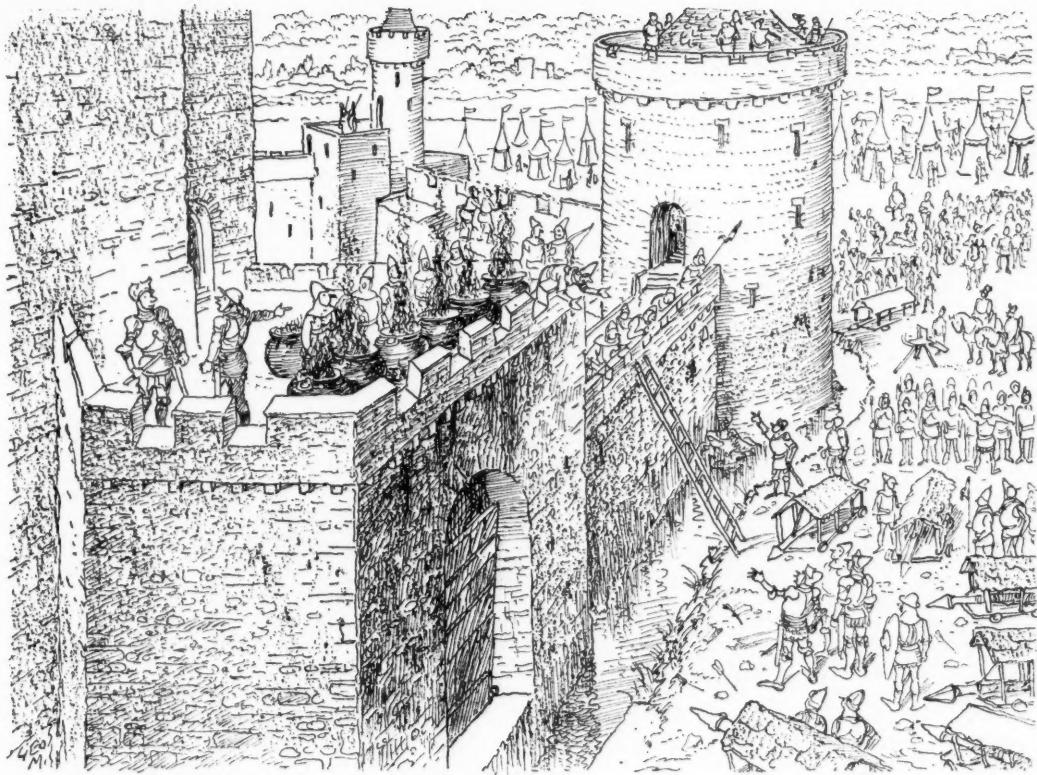
The day had opened with the presentation of a petition from five hundred and thirty thousand housewives, asking for more and better meat. Thus set on the path of optimism, they also asked for more "offal" and (the height of hopefulness) sausages "fuller in meat content." The petition was duly deposited in the sack kept behind Mr. Speaker's chair for such communications.

Civil Defence occupied the attention of the House most of the evening, and the Home Secretary formally abandoned the proposal that C.D. volunteers should be fined £5 if they failed to attend drills.

This disposed of, the plans to make people fit suppressors to their electrical apparatus, to ensure that they do not interfere with radio and television (and, above all, radar) transmissions, were further discussed. Nobody got excited about the proposals, and all doubts were seemingly lulled when the Attorney-General promised that no Government inspector would ever invade anyone's bathroom (especially when in use) to inspect suspected apparatus.

Mr. WILLIE WHITELEY, the Government Chief Whip, walked about with the expression of one who would willingly have fitted suppressors to the Members who rose one after another to talk. For, outside, London's record fog grew thicker and thicker and the thoughts of the distant home fires became more and more attractive.

In the Lords, Lord MORRISON was telling how hanging, drawing and quartering was to be abandoned, in the Scottish Criminal Justice Bill, as a penalty for treason. How did it come to be used at all in a land so enlightened as Scotland? Well, if truth must out,



"They say they'll willingly scrap all their battering rams if we agree to outlaw boiling oil."

it came from England and was one of the results of the Act of Union. Having thus neatly (and smilingly) passed the buck, Scottish Lord MORRISON, with but little resistance, was allowed to have his Bill.

WEDNESDAY, December 1st.—Mr. CHURCHILL was "called up" several times to-day, at the age of seventy-four and one day. The subject under discussion was the Government's proposal to increase from twelve months to eighteen the period of compulsory military service.

The Government fixed the period at eighteen months originally, but in face of a revolt by their supporters, cut it to twelve, only to revert to eighteen again under the pressure of circumstances. Members of the Government Front bench therefore looked apprehensive as Mr. CHURCHILL, wearing a red carnation, walked aggressively into the House this afternoon.

Mr. A. V. ALEXANDER, the Minister of Defence, moved the proposal, arguing that the Government was trying to strike a balance between the claims of the services and those of

industry. But the state of the world at present gave but little choice, and it was felt that the Forces had to be kept up, whatever the cost.

Mr. CHURCHILL agreed with all this, but complained that the Government's fault lay in vacillating inability to make up its mind. First eighteen months, then a retreat to twelve—then forward again to eighteen. What guarantee was there that, even now, the Government's "rebels" would not drive Ministers back to twelve once more?

He said he reserved the right to make some more detailed statement on Britain's defence position, later. What had happened to all the money granted to the Government for defence—surely the House had a right to know as much as the Kremlin knew? If war came—and that depended on us less than at any time in our history—then a terrible accountancy would be required of the Government.

Mr. SHINWELL's friends many times appealed to Mr. CHURCHILL, during his speech, to "come to the Bill." Mr. SHINWELL spoke for the better part of an hour, and it was in the last ninety

seconds that he first mentioned the Bill. However, most people seemed to have decided in advance which way they intended to vote, and when the division was called some thirty-eight Labour Members, together with eight Liberals and a couple of Communists, went into the lobby against the Government. The result of the vote (as amended, after a false start) was "Ayes, 338; Noes, 51."

THURSDAY, December 2nd.—A fair of depression overhung the Commons to-day, due partly, no doubt, to the excitements of the night before and partly to the business of to-day.

This was a discussion on film production and another on Scottish Criminal Justice. It was, to say the least, not a double-feature programme.

Before the controversial business of the day began, all joined in regretting the death (announced to-day) of Mr. HUBERT BEAUMONT, until recently Deputy Chairman of Committees. Not least moving of the tributes was that by Mr. WILLIE GALLACHER, who showed, not for the first time, that he is a very human person.



"Mr. Strachey's just going to take a bite of our special pie now."

Short Guide to South America

III

BEFORE we set forth the history, geography, geology, finance and industry of Argentina, here is a

Note on South American Dancing.

We should not, if we were you, let this part of life worry you much. Before we left London they tried to persuade us that we should find ourselves far from *simpatico*, indeed, we should be social outcasts, if we were not pretty skilled at the *Tango*, the *Samba*, the *Rumba*, the *Bumba*, the *Framba*, and the *Black Mamba*. We paid no attention whatever, thinking it far more important to devote the few spare minutes to learning a few words of the Spanish tongue. "If the *señoritas*", we said, "cannot find a common dance-drill with a British *diputado*, then there will be no dancing. But we think better of the *señoritas*, the *muchachas*, the *doncellas*—bless them!" And how right we were!

We have always set our face, and foot, against the tango. For one thing, we said, it was a Static Dance, and we could see no point in Static Dancing. If one is going to interrupt a good conversation, leave good food and drink, and exchange the restful sitting position for the exhausting perpendicular, in order to move about a dance floor embracing a lady, surely the main thing is to *move*. Otherwise one might just as well stay at home and have a hug on the hearthrug or tenderly caress her at the table. The geographical progression of the tango-dancers seemed comparable to that of a glacier or an application for an import licence. Further, we said that the dance (if it deserved that title) was un-English, un-Scottish, un-Irish, and un-Welsh. The movement (so far as there was any) resembled that of foreign cats stalking each other in an oozy jungle: and we would have none of it.

"Ah," they said, "but you have only seen this beautiful dance done badly by suburban Britons in London hotels! Wait till you see it done well by experts in its native lairs." Well, we have now seen this: and we are sorry—no, we are glad—to report that our old opinion still stands. What is more, we have made a startling discovery: that the tango is really pretty *un-South American*. Where this swampy manœuvre came from we have no notion: but in South America *they don't seem to like it*. At sea nothing reduced the population of the dance floor so surely and swiftly as the playing of a tango. That was a British band, you may say, and there were many British about, besides the Argentines and the Brazilians and the Uruguayans and the Paraguayans. Very well. But at Monte Video, with an Ambassador and his Lady, we went to a (highly respectable) night-haunt. As we warned you in an

earlier despatch, the darkness was practically pitch: but you could just make out whether there were people dancing or not. There were two very good bands which came, played, and went alternately. One of them played dances of general interest, foxtrots, waltzes and an occasional samba (or so we understood). The other played nothing but tangos. There was never the hint of a tune; but the orchestration was elaborate, the playing skilled and vigorous, and the noise fairly agreeable. When the tango band began we poor Britons retired discreetly to our table, anxious not to do the wrong thing and eager to see the sacred rite properly performed at last. *But nobody danced.* One—two—three long tangos jangled their way through the jungle. The band blew and bowed and banged and sweated nobly. But not one couple left their table: the dark floor was empty. This was *not* our notion of South American nightlife. So, during the fourth tango, we saluted the Ambassador's Lady and said "Excellency, come on!" Determined, but trepidatious, we entered the sacred square and began a dance which, though rhythmic, we hope, and rapid, had no more relation to the tango than a greyhound has to a pug. Peering at the band, we thought they looked a little shocked: but the scene changed at once. From every corner of the room the couples (not British but local) came, and merrily joined the dance. From all of which we conclude that the South Americans do not think much of the tango either. It must be kept going to amuse the bands.

For the samba, we thought, there is a little more to be said. It seems a gay little jig, and it is done to at least one gay little tune. We think we did once actually achieve the samba step for a few moments, with an English lady. With South American ladies we thought it better not to try. We said "We cannot do the samba: but we will show you our one-step, and you will like it". They said that was O.K. and we think they did like it. Certainly, the one-step fits the gay little tune very well: so there is another worry off your mind.

We never heard any reference to the rumba or the Black Mamba: so, if we were you, we should not bother to learn them either.

On the voyage home, finding ourselves, to our inexpressible dismay, Chairman of the Games Committee, we thought we would give the South Americans an insight into British dancing: and on Prize-Giving Night we organized a Sir Roger de Coverley. At first only two passengers confessed

to any knowledge of the drill, and we thought that if four or five couples turned out it would be surprising. But fourteen couples insisted on taking part: and the dance lasted for forty minutes. During the whole of that time the band played the same little tune indefatigably, and at the end had to be artificially restored. The Brazilians thought it was the finest British endurance feat they had witnessed since the war. It is a graceful and enjoyable affair, but should have a time-limit, perhaps.

Note on Navigation

On the bridge are many ingenious aids to navigation which would have surprised Columbus very much, and are pretty mysterious to us. There are the indicators of two "patent logs"—one trailed astern, and one, we understand, thrust down through the bottom of the ship—which record the speed and distance run. There is the gyroscopic compass, which, unlike the magnetic compass, is generally right. There is the clattering "Echo-sounder", a machine which sends a noise of some sort down to the bottom of the sea (if it is not too far away), and, using the echo, records the depth, which the navigator compares with the depths marked on the chart. There are the chronometers, reverently kept and consulted in their cushioned cases, and more trusted than the B.B.C. itself. There is the direction-finding apparatus—if you are in touch with a station on shore. And there is the magical radar, in which, though we have seen it at work two or three times, we still do not believe. In thick fog off the coast of Portugal we watched the captain threading his way between the invisible ships. A round black screen (like the inside of a gun)—a pencil of light going round and round it—and a number of golden dots: that is all. But the golden dots are other ships in the fog: and the captain can tell their course, and, more or less, their size. Columbus would have been burned for a sorcerer if he had imagined such a machine—and rightly. The captain can play all sorts of tricks with it. He presses a button and the picture is "short-range"—a mile or two from us. He presses another, and now he can see a ship seven miles away (though outside on the bridge you cannot see the foremast). How far away is the golden dot on the port bow, we inquire? The captain presses another button, and a little worm of light runs round and round our ship till it touches the golden dot and tells him the distance exactly.

We should clear her comfortably.

But hereabouts are many fishing vessels, and none can tell what they will do next: so for safety the captain alters course again. "Starboard Ten." Presently, we are safely past all the golden dots, the screen is a blank ahead, and we come back to our course. "Port—twenty" or whatever it is. But no, right at the top of the screen, is there not a new flicker, the beginning of a golden dot? Yes. Another ship, some seven miles away, but coming head-on. "Starboard Twenty": and the uncanny business begins again. All this time, though, the siren, whistle or what-not is drearily giving "one prolonged blast" at intervals "not exceeding two minutes", according to the Regulations. Nervous passengers, unable to sleep for the noise, imagine the ship groping blindly through the fog, not knowing that the Magic Eye can see every ship for (?) seven miles. When they are told about the wonders of radar they say indignantly "Then why make all that noise?" One answer is that *all* ships have not got the Magic Eye. The other, we gather, is that even the Magic Eye does not pick up everything—a small wooden craft, for example. Still, we see the passengers' point.

With all this modern gadgetry about, some people suppose that navigation has become a mere "push-button" affair. It is pleasant, therefore, to record that the old-fashioned stuff of sextant, sun and star still continues—and a privilege to see it in action. At noon, and earlier, there is the captain with his sextant, and a battery of younger sextants beside him, "shooting the sun". The old-fashioned ocean currents still sweep the ship this way or that, and none of your modern gadgets can say exactly what the deep blue ocean is doing in that kind of way. The tropical sun has not long gone down before the navigating officers are taking sights of the first stars; and as the morning light appears they are busy with the last planet. Columbus would have liked to see them at work. He would have liked, too, to see the "cross-staff" which the captain of the *Highland Brigade* had made for us by the ship's carpenter. Just two pieces of wood, with some markings on one of them—a very ancient instrument indeed. But the captain did nearly as well with it as he did with his modern sextant. If electricity and radar and radio failed and all the new gadgets were thrown overboard, our mariners would still get about a bit.

(Next week—We may actually get to Argentina. But who knows?)

A. P. H.

Old-School Acting Made Easy

SINCE Mr. Mortimer joined our repertory company, I have been able to spy upon old-school acting at close quarters. And although Mr. Mortimer never vouchsafes any of his hoary professional secrets by word of mouth (his off-stage conversation being chiefly concerned with flat-racing and the deterioration of beer through the ages), I have managed by careful observation to gather a few notes on his methods. I now present them in the belief that they may be of some benefit to those who hope to assist in a revival of (Mr. Mortimer's own phrase) the histrionic art.

What it boils down to, my friends, is this: you have to *take the stage*. (Once you've taken it of course you have to hold it, against all comers: but we must confine ourselves here to broad principles, and the subtleties will follow as the night the day.)

This, then, is the way to take the stage. When you have something fairly important to say (and pretty nearly anything can be made to sound important if you do it like this) you take a deep breath, roll your eyes about in their sockets with your head thrown well back, and move majestically to the centre of the stage. If an actor who doesn't know the rules gets in your way, brush him aside with a broad sweep of the arm, blinking the while in a preoccupied way. Having arrived in the centre of things, and having ascertained that the other players have withdrawn to prepared positions, briefly examine your finger-nails, look in the direction of the gallery with one eyebrow raised, and speak.

Now you must bear in mind here that you speak in a *special way*. Everything you say must *mean* something. You will be surprised at the amount of tense drama, for instance, that can be extracted from a line like "Will it rain, do you think?" An ordinary actor might imagine that the audience could hardly care less whether it was going to rain or not, because they are waiting to find out whether Martha marries the rich man for his money in the end or the handsome man for his pretty speeches. But let Mr. Mortimer get to work on that simple inquiry and the audience will get a vivid mental picture of a torrential downpour awaiting its cue to carry the entire cast screaming down to the sea in a menacing flood, like wisps of straw. They will await the answer with bated breaths. A new twist has been given to the story. To the devil with Martha—how's the barometer?

It might seem to you that for the remainder of the performance the audience will be in such a state of anxiety to find out whether it ever does rain that they neglect to follow the plot and go home with a very garbled idea of what it was all about. But our Mr. Mortimer is clever. He doesn't give them a chance to dwell on the rain problem. All the time he's on the stage he keeps finding fresh shocks, surprises and awful questions for them. They are constantly being confronted with such startling items as "Is there another cup of tea, please, Lady Ellen?"—which makes them wonder whether the unfortunate lady with the teapot is on the verge of bankruptcy. Or "It is exactly ten minutes to six"—which makes them turn to one another and whisper, "Someone'll get murdered at six o'clock—you see." Or "Can I give you a lift, Miss Honoria? I'm going your way"—which gives the impression that something devilish is afoot, and that in the next act it will turn out that Miss Honoria has either been found stabbed in a ditch, or—worse. In this way the most common-place domestic comedy can be made as thrilling as *The Face at the Window* with no extra charge.

Another little trick, which isn't too difficult, is to keep on talking when you should have stopped. For example, suppose you have to say "Good night, John," and exit Left. The script might read like this:

(*The MAID holds the door open.*)

JOHN. Good night, Sir Henry.

SIR HENRY. Good night, John.

(*Sir Henry goes out Left, followed by the MAID.*)

That is a straightforward, crisp piece of play-writing, as smooth and taut as you could wish. But let Mr. Mortimer loose on it, and by Thursday or Friday the episode will go something like this:

(*The MAID holds the door open, stifling a yawn.*)

JOHN. Good night, Sir Henry.

SIR HENRY. Eh? Ah, yes. Bless my soul, it's time I was moving, I suppose. (*Taking JOHN's hands and shaking them warmly.*) Good night, old man. Good night, John, my boy. I must be off. (*With tears starting in his eyes, he moves towards the door, and pauses.*) Good night, my boy. (*A little farewell wave of the hand.*) To the MAID.) Don't bother to show me out, my dear.

MAID (*hissing venomously*). Come on, Joe—it's nearly half-past nine!

SIR HENRY (*at the door*). See you again, my boy. Good night.

(*SIR HENRY, with another, more pathetic wave, goes off Left, followed by the MAID, who exchanges a wink with JOHN.*)

I must confess I have not yet been able to fathom the reason for this sort of carry-on, but there must be something in it, because these old actors are pretty shrewd.

Gesture is a most important branch of old-school acting. The gestures employed are not the same as the neurotic jerkings and posturings of the arty schools. They are grave and dignified, and to those of the audience who are in tune with this style of acting they are easily recognized and translated. A hand placed on the forehead, palm inwards, for example, signifies that Mr. Mortimer is worried: perhaps not exactly worried, but just thoughtful; the context will usually tip you off. If the hand is placed palm *outwards* Mr. Mortimer is either tired or mildly drunk. (If he's supposed to be *really* drunk his gestures have to be seen to be believed.) If Mr. Mortimer sinks into a chair and buries his hands in his wig, something terrible has happened. If he places a hand over his heart, either he has eaten too much arsenic or one of his children has been ungrateful. If he flings out both arms, throws out his chest, and lifts his chin at somebody, he just doesn't care a damn what they do to him. If he makes an entrance with his hands under his coat-tails, moving his eyes about craftily, he has cut everyone out of his will. If he falls on one knee at the feet of the leading lady, with arms stretching upwards, he has decided to turn over a new leaf. And so on.

The important thing is that all these gestures are very effective, and I think I know the reason why. It's because the audience likes to be reminded how very hard the actor is *acting*. If the other people in the cast give the impression that they're not acting at all, our Mr. Mortimer is bound to stand out a mile. And surely, standing out a mile is the thing to aim for, isn't it? I ask you.

○ ○

Stimulus with Two Responses

AN apple falling from a tree
Reminds, of course, the highbrow gents
Of Newton and of Gravity.
To me it merely represents
Something to fill a cavity.

At the Ballet and Opera

*Don Juan—Die Meistersinger
(COVENT GARDEN)*

THE winter season of ballet at Covent Garden opened, most appropriately, with *Les Patineurs*, complete with snow, Chinese lanterns, blue bonnets, capes trimmed with ermine tails and the old-fashioned lilt of MEYERBEER, all as delightful as ever. BRIAN SHAW has donned—none too confidently as yet—the skates of HAROLD TURNER. BERYL GREY is dainty as a snowflake, pretty as any maiden who ever adorned a Christmas card, and full of a charm that quite defies rendering into terms of card-board or cold print.

The new ballet on the programme, FREDERICK ASHTON's *Don Juan* composed to STRAUSS's tone-poem, produces a curious impression. It is danced against an architectural setting whose white wall is riven by a deep crack. The costumes are coloured in soft shades of blue and grey to throw into relief the romantic *Don Juan* of ROBERT HELPMANN, whose brightly-striped costume provides the only high note of colour on the stage. The dazzling Titian-haired beauty of MOIRA SHEARER as the *Young Wife* and the dark eyes of MARGOT FONTEYN, who, as *La Mort Amoureuse*, is dressed in black, provide the only other accents of colour. The choreography is musical

and beautifully designed, and the opening of the ballet is particularly striking. On a darkened stage, and in silence, *Don Juan* is revealed in a series of spot-lit flashes, flitting from one love to another. Then the lights go up, the orchestra gives out its proud challenge, and we watch the philanderings of the Don until they end with the kiss of Death.

It is all highly effective—and yet in spite of all their artistry the choreographer and the designer (EDWARD BURRA) have failed to achieve a fusion of music and stage action. The visual part of the ballet floats on the rich and grandiose surface of STRAUSS's music much as the tiny cirrus clouds of egg-yolk float on the oil of a curdled mayonnaise. The reason for this failure appears to be neither musical, pictorial nor terpsichorean, but literary. The underlying idea of ASHTON's ballet is indicated by the quotation from Theophile Gautier's *La Mort Amoureuse* (in Swinburne's translation) which is printed on the programme—"The love that caught strange light from Death's own eyes . . ."—but STRAUSS's tone-poem is inspired by the romantic German poet Nicolaus Lenau, and the two just do not mix. The *Don Juan* who emerges from the Strauss-Lenau camp is robustly heartless and joyously amoral, casting each love aside in his stormy pursuit of the manifold charms of Woman, proclaiming that he will build no temple to new love upon the ruins

of the old, vowing himself to the passion that is always new. Every beauty in the world is unique and peerless as the love he would lay at her feet—so off and away to triumphs ever new until the storm of enjoyment has blown itself out and the ashes of passion lie cold upon the hearth!

Placed side by side with such violent eroticism, it is little wonder that a *Don Juan* compounded of the elegant sensibility of Gautier and the drooping poetics of Swinburne should seem colourless. He cannot withstand the gusts of passion that come to him across the footlights. They blow him clean away.

The performance of *Die Meistersinger* was not too satisfactory for a number of reasons. TOM WILLIAMS has an excellent bass voice, but lacks the range of feeling and the stage presence for the rôle of *Hans Sachs*, which is the lynch-pin of the opera. Then SET SVANHOLM's romantic looks are not matched by the quality of his voice, and *Walther's Preislied* consequently fell flat. The best individual performance was GRAHAME CLIFFORD's *Beckmesser*—an excellent character-study. ELIZABETH SCHWARZKOPF was a charming *Eva*, but neither she nor MURRAY DICKIE, who between them carried off all the honours of pure singing, have voices suitable for Wagner. MURRAY DICKIE's *David*, sung and acted in the Italian style, was comically out of place. Altogether it was a disappointing evening.

D. C. B.



IF the authors, composers and designers of *Oranges and Lemons* had taken a call on the first night, the Hammersmith stage would have overflowed. Full figures are not yet in: at the time of going to press, with the adding machines still rattling away in a corner, I make the total somewhere between forty and fifty. How Mr. LAURIER LISTER, who "designed and directed," managed to drill his regiment, I cannot think; but he has kept it well in step. The march-past is always a brisk business, and it will be odd if at length this revue does not conquer the West End in the wake of *Tuppence Coloured*.

It is not a hearty, back-slapping affair. The company neither shouts you into submission nor hurtles bolts from the blue. It prefers the satirical flick, the lightly fantastic caper, the intricate lyric. The only broad fooling is a bit of surrealist farce by Mr. SIMON WILKES: his scene is a hotel bedroom in which, if I remember, miners crawl through the skirting-board and nothing is but what is not. In reviewing a revue we can merely pull plums from the pie here and there. One of them is certainly the happy sketch by Miss MARY DUNN in which Mr. MAX ADRIAN, as an actor of Wildean comedy who has lost his voice, crackles inaudibly through length upon length of epigram that we are grateful to lose. If it were not for his strange huskiness Mr. ADRIAN could obviously play the whole of *An Ideal Husband* single-handed. Fortunately, a few minutes later he is in the best of voice and spirits, and towards the end of the evening he shows us—in the words of Mr. ALAN MELVILLE's lyric—what has happened "since they nationalized Mr. Emett." In the full dress of a Permanent Civil Servant Mr. ADRIAN drives an Emett locomotive towards the remains of Wisteria Halt. But it is not like the old days when he "drove dear Nelly for years to Clovelly": very soon Nelly, her funnel wreathed in red tape, insists on plunging backwards to that misty half-world where the Emett rolling-stock lies guarded by its spindly shadows, long superannuated from the yards at Friars Fiddling.

At the Play

Oranges and Lemons (LYRIC, HAMMERSMITH)—*The Cherry Orchard* (NEW)—*The Father* (EMBASSY)—*Gog and MacGog* (ARTS)

MISS DIANA CHURCHILL, as ready as Mr. ADRIAN, has a rewarding MELVILLE lyric in "Art of Midlothian," as an overburdened playgoer who has been to her last Edinburgh Festival; her "Saleslady," in accents yet unknown, passes every vowel and consonant through a mincer; and she is uncommonly adroit in a serious JOYCE GRENFELL monologue for a discouraged idealist. The revue



A MINGLED CHIME

has many pleasures: the impersonations of Miss MARJORIE DUNKELS, who hits off half a dozen actresses in a never malicious dream of fair women; the monologues of Miss DAPHNE OXFORD and—as a galumphing Cockney child—of Miss CHARLOTTE MITCHELL; and the joyful boom of Miss ELISABETH WELCH, though her method, which is unvarying, begins to pall a little after half a dozen songs. What else? Mr. ADRIAN as a Bengal Dancer, Miss ROSE HILL as a harassed Britannia: this will become a roll-call, so let me hope simply to see the same cast in Shaftesbury Avenue or thereabouts (something must be done about the dancing), with its full team of collaborators in action. A recount is now in progress.

Orange grove to *Cherry Orchard*: this year London has had three revivals of the miraculous play, and the third is the best. Mr.

HUGH HUNT, up from Bristol, has overcome the problem of casting from the Old Vic's permanent company. He has, too, that gift for a producer: Dame EDITH EVANS as *Madame Ranevsky*. We have waited years for Dame EDITH to play this part, to fill the nursery with her home-coming flourish in the grey dawn, to break down on the night of the dance when the estate passes into the hands of *Lopakhin*, and to bid her old home and her old life farewell on that October day when the axes ring already in the cherry orchard and there can be nothing but good-bye: "My dear, my gentle, beautiful orchard! My life, my youth, my happiness, good-bye." Dame EDITH subtly recreates the lovable, feckless woman on whom October steals: no other player of the part has made us so conscious of the past life in Paris, of the regret and disillusion and overwhelming nostalgia. It is a magnificent performance. Although nothing in the Vic revival reaches it, there is much to remember: Mr. ROBERT EDISON's *Trofimov*, true and acutely-timed; Sir CEDRIC HARDWICKE's *Gaev*—it is a pity that his diction does not match his beautifully composed mask; and Miss MARY MARTLEW's *Varya*, in her dark sorrow. Mr. MARK DIGNAM drives boldly at

Lopakhin, not naturally his part, and Mr. CECIL WINTER, who is always reliable, has a sharp idea of *Semyonov-Pishtchik*, the Russian Micawber for whom something turns up at last. But the performance rarely falters. Mr. HUNT has nicely judged CHEKHOV's pauses: he permits the play neither to scamper nor—as in certain other Chekhovian revivals we have known—to dawdle and drag like a gramophone on the point of running down. Two of Miss TANYA MOISEIWITSCH's settings are admirable, especially the nursery beyond whose windows we are to imagine the great drift of blossom in the cherry orchard under the first clear, cold morning light of May. The second act set, a

little cramped I feel, is less good. For the rest, Chekhovians can visit the New unfearing: here, without dilution, is the sweet grief, the enchanting melancholy, and here also is Dame EDITH at Madame Ranevsky's heart.

Strindbergian tragedy is sterner stuff. There have been times, I must confess with shame, when—sitting at a play by the prime misogynist—I have felt ready to echo Miss CHARLOTTE MITCHELL's young Cockney in *Oranges and Lemons*: "The words is very interesting, but the meaning's a bit silly." Still, few can see *The Father* unmoved. A visit to it is not to be planned lightly, and I do not recommend it for a family celebration. On the first night at the Embassy conditions were suitable. Outside, a grimy woollen blanket of fog pressed down upon Swiss Cottage: we crept, hushed, into the theatre where the curtain rose presently on the charged atmosphere of the Captain's sitting-room, with snow tossing thickly beyond the window. This fight between helpless, enslaved Man and devouring Woman is not a play for sunny weather, and the Embassy cast tackled it in the proper wintry spirit. All the gusts of December beat across the stage when the single-minded *Laura* (Miss FREDA JACKSON) was telling the Captain of Mr. MICHAEL REDGRAVE that love between the sexes meant strife. Both Miss JACKSON, as a woman with the caressing affection of a cold chisel, and Mr. REDGRAVE, as the Captain who

cannot be master of his fate, act with a biting intensity, though Mr. REDGRAVE is better on the whole in the wire-strung approach to madness than in the strait-jacket terrors of the last act where he does not strike the proper chill. His performance, as far as the throwing of the lamp, is possibly the best in his record. Any husband who is in the mood, one of these nights, for tossing a lighted lamp at his wife should examine Mr. REDGRAVE's technique, his footwork and nice easy swing. Miss LILLY KANN deals justly with the old *Nurse*. It is a repellent play; but its power is undeniable, Swedish drill for the mind and the

emotions; and after that fierce battle between diabolical wife and slowly maddened husband the Embassy audience moved more silently than ever into an even thicker, dolorously fuming fog.

So at length to what Mr. JAMES BRIDIE, in his first-night speech, called a little Scotch mist, the farcical comedy of *Gog and MacGog*. Another title would be *Civil War in Ashet*. This Ashet, Mr. BRIDIE assures us, is a village in the Hither Highlands, and

Laneworthy - Figg of the Players' Theatre—presents him with a gleam in the eye, a roll in the voice, and a whirling fury of declamation like a volatile windmill. *Briskett*, maliciously delighted by *MacGog*, organizes a testimonial supper and mock presentation. It is then, suddenly, that row presses upon row: the village, fired by *MacGog*'s heady eloquence, dissolves in a kind of bellicose Highland fling, and before we know where we are the Umbilicals and the A Minus B party are shooting at each other across the barricades. Mankind, murmurs the author, will fight about anything. A farce of this kind can have no real end, and Mr. BRIDIE just stops. Once more he has emptied from the bag a bundle of amiable characters, sprinkled the stage with ideas, and made little attempt to tidy it all up into a play. No matter.

Mr. BRIDIE, here in an expansive mood, enjoys good talk, and usually we can enjoy it with him, though there are times when a troubled Southerner, caught up in the swirl of this Scotch reel, must pray for a little grace while he thumbs a glossary of Caledonian idiom. And I may be forgiven for suggesting that the he-ancient called *Hornolloch*, who goes now and then into a volatile trance, becomes something of a bore. There are apt performances by Mr. KENNETH HYDE as the critic, startled Sassenach; Mr. RICHARD WORDSWORTH as the schoolmaster who looks and speaks uncannily like Mr. Alastair Sim; Mr.

JAMES HAYTER as the doctor who is suddenly head of the Umbilly-boys; Miss ADRIEN CORRIE, altogether charming as the landlord's daughter; and Mr. DAVID BIRD, certainly the plummest man of war—named agreeably *C.S.M. Buff*—who ever proposed "The Ladies." But Mr. CLUNES carries in triumph the evening's chief burden, especially in his barn-storming Shakespeare-medley that includes a remarkable and neighbourly "God for Richmond, Scotland and St. George!" takes in "I am dying, Egypt, dying," and soars finally to a majestic and quite inconsequent "Get thee to Milford Haven!" Mr. ESME PERCY has produced with resource. J. C. T.



(*The Father*)

A QUESTION OF PARENTAGE

The Captain MR. MICHAEL REDGRAVE
Laura MISS FREDA JACKSON

the farce is a mild fantastic joke about a local quarrel—what somebody describes as "a dam'silly Third Programme argument"—between village doctor and schoolmaster. Each, like Mr. BRIDIE himself, is a man of ideas. One upholds an Umbilical Theory; the watchword of the opposing party is "A Minus B." They would probably have gone on arguing until Doomsday if two visitors had not called at the Spleuchan Arms—firstly an English dramatic critic, H. P. Briskett, and secondly Harry MacGog himself, an itinerant poet whose poetry seems to have a touch of the McGonagall manner. Mr. ALEC CLUNES—once the Bassett



"I wonder if you could tell me what time we are due to enter the Severn Tunnel?"

Our Booking Office (By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Books for Younger Children

THERE is a great gulf fixed between authors and artists who (as it seems from their products) think that anything will do for children, and those others, who, remembering their own young needs, include all the small loved and lovable details that bring life to books. Because of these faithful details in pictures and text, *Grey Rabbit and the Wandering Hedgehog* (COLLINS, 3/6), by ALISON UTTLEY, with illustrations by MARGARET TEMPEST, is perfection for small children. "Grey Rabbit" longed to make a coat for the ragged tramping hedgehog because "he was very nice, and you mustn't call him a dirty old ragamuffin. He may be dirty, but what is dirt? It is only good mother earth." So she turned out her piece drawer, finding not enough scraps to make a coat for a bumble-bee, and then she started borrowing from her friends. That thought makes the story, and the artist adds a softly coloured enchantment. Another book by ALISON UTTLEY is *Sam Pig in Trouble* (FABER, 7/6), with drawings by A. E. KENNEDY. The little pig is as kind and as adventurous as ever, and the book is crowded with delight—Breadmen, a Punch and a Judy, a Muffin Man, a Pikelet Man, a Sandman and a journey to Babylon. There is another great treat in *Babar and that Rascal Arthur* (METHUEN, 10/6), by LAURENT DE BRUNHOFF. The King Elephant's character is as good as ever, and the pictures are enchanting—especially the ones that show the three small elephants (Pom, Flora and Alexander) in their little blue coats, and another of Arthur (who is, "of course," King

Babar's cousin) twisting his beret to make a pouch for young kangaroos. The illustrations are as clear as the best daylight, but surely it is a mistake for the text to be reproduced in handwriting. Next on the list and (maybe) in merit comes the story of a young Giant Panda who journeyed from Tibet *In His Little Black Waistcoat to India* (LONGMANS, 7/6). On his journey he met, among illustrious others, a very smug sacred bull, a tiger and an elephant. The pictures and text are by JOAN KIDDELL-MONROE, and the endearing eyes of the Panda, who had to dance for his supper, assure us that all must be well with him at the last. It is pleasant to find an easier title in *Dormouse Awake* (MACMILLAN, 7/6), and a simple unpretentious story, written and illustrated by EILEEN A. SOPER. The tale of the dormouse who reached the foot of a rainbow is full of pretty shining pictures, and has a twist at the end which will amuse everybody. "B.B.'s Fairy Book" (HOLLIS AND CARTER, 15/-) is illustrated most beautifully by D. J. WATKINS-PITCHFORD. The author re-introduces his Little Grey Men, and on Meeting Hill we find the Brothers Grimm and other famous writers. It is a wonderful production, but surely the old fairy stories are good enough to stand without trappings. And now there is only space in which to mention a few excellent books for those who can read for themselves: *Jobie* (SHAKESPEARE HEAD, 6/-), by HELEN GARRETT, illustrated delightfully by KATHLEEN GELL, is a good story about children in a New England village. *Adventures at Friendly Farm* (HOLLIS AND CARTER, 6/-), by RUTH W. HOW, with illustrations by JOAN KIDDELL-MONROE, is about two boys on a farm and their adventures with gypsies and horses. It is full of country lore, and the real animals have definite characters. *Getting to Know Your Pony* (COLLINS, 10/6), by LIONEL EDWARDS, has brief helpful text and lovely pictures. As a final treat, for all ages, for Christmas afternoon, there is a cut-out picture book—*A Theatre You Can Make* (PUFFIN BOOKS, 2/6), which contains scenery in good colours, lots of characters and three fairy stories dramatized by JANE CUMMINGS.

B. E. B.

(Books for older children will be reviewed next week.)

T. S. Eliot on Culture

Mr. T. S. ELIOT in *Notes Towards the Definition of Culture* (FABER, 10/6) considers in his most hesitant and apologetic style the conditions in which Culture flourishes and its relation to class, region, religion, education and politics: in an Appendix he reprints three broadcast talks on the Unity of European Culture. Like Coleridge, with whom he has something in common, he throws out numerous profound suggestions, perfectly expressed, which may perhaps be developed later by lesser and more systematic minds; but his thesis as a whole is not persuasive and is unlikely to secure much assent, except among elderly lovers of the past in club libraries, an audience to whom Mr. ELIOT would probably not wish to appeal. The casual commerce with ideas which provides matter for the poet is quite unlike the systematic study necessary to the "student of social biology," and that is what Mr. ELIOT rather surprisingly claims to be. The economic and psychological roots of Culture need more investigation than they receive in this pamphlet, which argues that in the future as in the past the cultural élite must be recruited mainly from those favoured by birth or affluence, but does not discuss why Culture has been thus limited in previous periods or show why it should continue thus limited in different circumstances to come. Those who are called "the herd people" by thinkers with whom Mr. ELIOT has more in common than he would like to admit are apparently for ever to be

excluded: he does not apparently consider this exclusion requires remedy or regret.

R. G. G. P.

Overseas Trade During the Napoleonic Wars

When Lloyds came out with an illuminated "Ships, Colonies and Commerce" for the Jubilee of George III it recognized, with a clarity for which the rest of us have never been conspicuous, the determining factors of the next two centuries of social history. And it is what one might call the social history of the Navy, the Merchant Service and Colonial Commerce that has been studied by a galaxy of experts in *The Trade Winds* (ALLEN AND UNWIN, 18/-). Mr. C. NORTHCOTE PARKINSON and his eight collaborators devote themselves to 1793-1815 as the closest possible parallel—given privates for submarines—to 1939-45. Their first six chapters deal with ship-owning and insurance; seaports; ships—types and employment; and seamen in health and sickness. Four more describe the trade routes—East Indian, West Indian, American, Newfoundland; and two others the Slave Trade and Post Office Packets. How this, the New Look in naval history, would have delighted such precursors of the inter-war wilderness as Cope Cornford of *The Morning Post*! The personal element is stressed; and its outmoded gestures are interpreted with striking accuracy. Yet national responsibilities are fairly shouldered. Our ill-used seamen, for instance, are equally deplored with the "prime negroes" it was uneconomic to maltreat. A vivid glossary and an enticingly ample bibliography complete an indispensable book.

H. P. E.

Past and Present

Even if Mr. HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL's *Twilight Grey* (CASSELL, 12/6) were not a very readable and delightful book of reminiscences it would be a remarkable feat, for as much time separates it from his first book as divides *Vanity Fair* from Boswell's *Johnson*; and yet Mr. VACHELL did not begin to write till his early thirties, having passed his twenties cattle-ranching in California. In his retrospect of the far distant past the author tends perhaps to overestimate the dignity and graciousness of those at the top of the social hierarchy and the contentment with their lot of those at the bottom. In contrast with the Victorian age, when, he says, domestics deemed it an honour to wait on the quality, these present times seem to Mr. VACHELL an Upsilonia, as he calls it, a topsy-turvy world in which young men "have the impudence to tell me that two shillings an hour for manual labour is underpayment." But there is very little grumbling in the book, for Mr. VACHELL has an almost unfailing charm against querulousness in the love for children which permeates these pages, keeping alive the zest for existence which has always characterized him. The chief object of this love is his granddaughter Josephine, to whom the book is dedicated and who, to judge from the frontispiece, might have tranquillized even Timon of Athens. But there are many other children in the book, and all of them bear out the author's opinion that children have become "astoundingly more intelligent and more attractive than the children of yesterday."

H. K.

Norfolk Diary

To those who like being carried in the mind to the wild places of the countryside by an observer with the eye of an artist and the gift of quiet, perceptive commentary, *Heron Lake* (BATCHWORTH, 12/6) is warmly recommended. During the war Mr. LESLIE PAUL was attached for nearly a year as educational sergeant to a unit in training on a great Norfolk estate, and his work left him time to keep

watch on the bird life of two lakes and to make real friends in the neighbourhood. He was adopted by a pair of small brothers, mighty hunters who spoke trenchantly of rural mysteries in a thick strange tongue full of the ups and downs of "z"s and "r"s, and who initiated him into such lively sports as pike-snatching. There was a sad farmer whose comment on the ills of the world was always "That's what comes a-tractoring a-Sundays," and there were hot, damp dances in the village hall at which soap-shined damsels exclaimed "Git along then, they doan't now!" and having thus fulfilled the claims of conversation rested their heads primly on their partners' shoulders. Among all these simple pleasures Mr. PAUL enjoyed himself so much that he pondered the step, grave in military circles, of declining leave; and we may be grateful for the charm and unforced humour with which he passes on his enjoyment. He has a keen curiosity about people—the sketch of his unhappy colleague, for instance, mourning the peace-time joys of professional pig-killing, is excellent—but it is mainly as a naturalist that he writes this chronicle, which finds recurring drama in the bitter battles of the wild swans. E. O. D. K.

The Spirit of Spring

Not for nothing has Mr. HOWARD SPRING made the teller of his latest tale a painter of portraits. For the art of good portrait-painting is by the presentation of the person to reveal the personality, and that, precisely, is what has been done in *There is No Armour* (COLLINS, 12/6). It is a long book and its characters are many, and every one of them is perfectly realized by no elaboration of analysis but in speech and action, his bodily appearance particularized by the most delicate brush-work, the depths of his being illuminated by the searchlight of divination. It were fruitless in this little space to try even to indicate the scope of the adventures and interrelations of this complex of Pentecosts and Kittos and Brimlows and Randles whose company we enjoy so long, witnesses of their births and their deaths, their fulfilment or frustration, in a Manchester suburb still fragrantly rural, in a London hectic or tense, and on the Cornish coasts and waters whose loveliness is the very genius of the story. Suffice it to pay tribute to Mr. SPRING's exquisite apprehension of the dreams of childhood and the problems of youth, his poignant sense of the inevitability of growth and change and decay, his awareness of the inescapable paradox that man, in his individual incarnations so often admirable, should have evolved a scheme of things so sorry; and to the craftsmanship with which he has given all this a local habitation in a narrative of never-failing liveliness, shot through with the humour of the humanist and the wisdom of the poet.

F. B.

Christmas Cards

THE Grenfell Association is again issuing an attractive series of cards in aid of its welfare work among the British settlers in Labrador and Northern Newfoundland. Funds are urgently needed, particularly to check the spread of tuberculosis and to rebuild some of the original wooden hospitals and nursing stations, now over forty years old. An illustrated leaflet (price 1d.), showing the cards offered this year, can be had from the Secretary, the Grenfell Association, 66 Victoria Street, S.W.1, from whom the cards themselves (at prices from 3d. to 1s. 2d.) may also be obtained.



"How d'you spell Rembrandt?"

It's Funny the Way Things Happen.

IT now seems a reasonably safe bet that my outdoor tomatoes are not going to ripen after all, and I would like to take this opportunity to exchange condolences with all who are similarly placed. I would also like to explain that I grow tomatoes because my wife's brother's name is Alec.

The connection may not be immediately obvious. At the time of Alec's baptism in 1911, there existed two strong schools of thought about what his name should be, one school of thought (Uncle George) maintaining

the child should be named George, the other school of thought (Uncle Alec) consistently advancing the claims of Alec. Uncle Alec won on a show of hands, and Uncle George at once went abroad in a fit of pique lasting three years.

During Uncle George's absence on pique his house, which he left untenanted, fell into serious disrepair. The roof leaked badly—always a noticeable sign of serious disrepair—and what it leaked on to was the grand piano. This was fortunate in one way

—the piano intercepted and absorbed the water as it leaked, and the floor was thus saved from damage. But it cannot be overlooked that the piano depreciated steadily in value, as did its contents; for Uncle George, after many futile attempts to learn to play the piano, had finally given it up as a bad job, and used the instrument as a repository for minor valuables.

Included among these minor valuables was a book called *The Pickwick Papers*, although the actual title has nothing to do with my tomatoes. Across the flyleaf of this book was written "Edward L. Kemperton." Edward L. Kemperton was sorry to hear of Uncle George's departure for foreign lands, as he wanted to read *The Pickwick Papers* again, and was hoping that Uncle George might be persuaded to return it to him. However, he possessed his soul in patience until Uncle George's fit of pique had spent itself. When Uncle George had been back in residence twenty-four hours Edward L. Kemperton went to see him and, after the conventional inquiries, asked if he had finished with his book yet.

This placed Uncle George in a very awkward spot indeed, for the book had been reduced to pulp, as would happen to any book, no matter what its title might be, if it had spent slightly more than a year inside a grand piano awash with rain-water. Uncle George, playing for time, said he had not yet had a chance to read it, but promised to return it in one week. He spent his week of grace scouring the second-hand bookshops for an edition of *The Pickwick Papers* similar to that ruined by his negligence. His search was rewarded, and after some practice on the backs of old envelopes he succeeded in forging "Edward L. Kemperton" across the flyleaf. He then posted the book to Edward L. Kemperton with many expressions of gratitude.

Edward L. Kemperton was not in the least deceived, mainly because he had written his name in ink and Uncle George had written it in pencil. Further investigation revealed that the flyleaf already bore another name—the name, in fact, of one Lilian Smith. Edward L. Kemperton at once concluded that Lilian Smith was yet another victim of Uncle George's casual habits with borrowed property, and he therefore resolved to restore the book to her—a gesture of some nobility, as it would leave him without a copy of *The Pickwick Papers*. He ascertained Lilian Smith's address—no difficult task, as it was written below her name on the flyleaf—called on her, and explained his mission.

Lilian Smith, who was bitterly ashamed of having sold her book to a second-hand shop, did not enlighten him. Instead, she offered Edward L. Kemperton tea and muffins. Within a week Edward L. Kemperton was calling daily for tea and muffins, and within a year Lilian Smith was Lilian Smith no longer, but rather Lilian Kemperton.

One of the features of the wedding was a large and hideous floral horseshoe in which the happy couple stood to receive felicitations. It was supplied by a local florist, and to get it done in time he had to keep his staff at work until almost midnight on the eve of the wedding. His staff included—or rather comprised—an innocent and beautiful young girl who was supposed to be going to the pictures with her sweetheart at seven-thirty. At nine-fifteen her sweetheart, through with women, swept out of the cinema foyer and swept into a public-house in a hell of a temper. Standing next to him at the bar was a middle-aged man of seafaring aspect. A casual remark—its exact purpose is neither here nor there—served as an introduction, and at first light the following morning the chief mate of the *Camberwell Beauty* was astounded to notice among the hands mustered on the f'c'sle . . .

But I am getting away from my tomatoes. I casually mentioned to my brother-in-law Alec that I had half a mind to try my hand at outdoor tomatoes this year.

"I'll give you a dozen plants for your birthday," he said.

"I say, will you really?" I said.

"Certainly I will," he said, "sure as my name's Alec."

And, as his name was Alec, he did.

The mystery which still surrounds a large part of Wilson's life, particularly his early career before he embarked on the Grand Tour of Italy, extends to his work of all periods which it is impossible in most cases to date with accuracy. Two early views of Dover, however, painted before 1747, show him as a distinctive landscape painter before the beginning of his Italian period, which was to mark a turning-point in his career; and thereafter the influences of Claude, notably in "A View of Rome from the Garden of the Villa Madama," and of Poussin seen in the "Villa of Maecenas at Tivoli," are apparent throughout his six-year stay in Italy.

But more appealing to most visitors than these excursions in the classical manner will be the group of tranquil, meditative paintings of English country houses. "Wilton House" and the two "Moor Parks" are exquisite examples

of this phase; loveliest of all perhaps is the "View of Croome Court," near Worcester, which breathes the spirit of a bygone England only recaptured in our day by Algernon Newton. A number of previously unexhibited works, such as the lately rediscovered Roman drawings belonging to Lord Dartmouth, enrich a collection which finally establishes Richard Wilson as one of the great eighteenth-century masters of landscape art.

N. A. D. W.

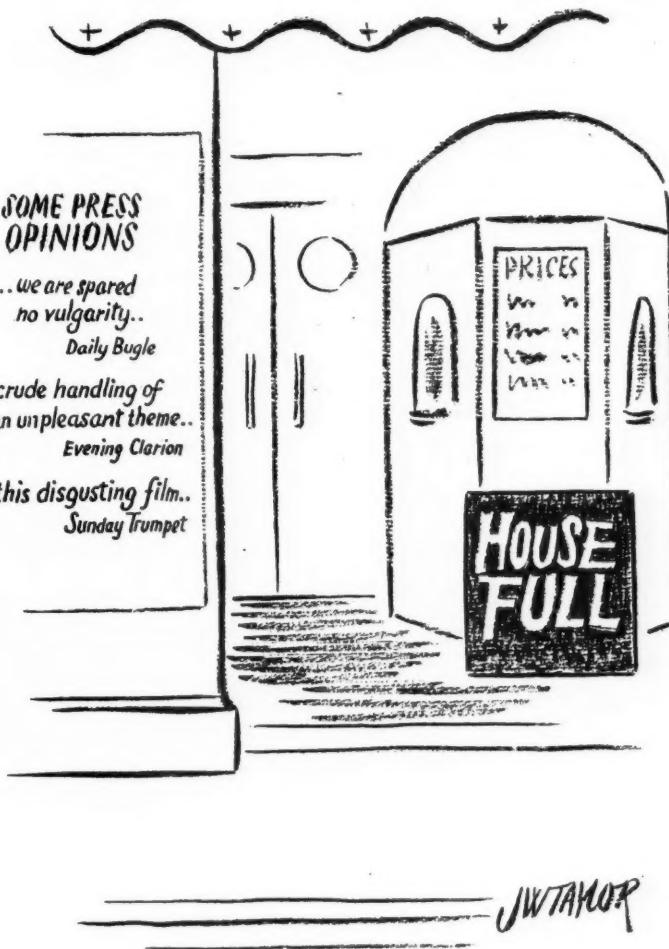
• •

"If Mr. —— hears any more scandal concerning him, his wife's Sister or Mother, or any of their friends, from this date, they will be dealt with in Court. And he will not be responsible for any debts which may occur in his mane of which he knows nothing about."

Announcement in Wilts. paper.
Rather a remote possibility, surely?

Homage to Richard Wilson

THOUGH Richard Wilson has been called "the father of English landscape painting," art historians have usually been more concerned to trace his pedigree than to name his descendants. The exhibition of some hundred and thirty paintings and drawings which affords the first comprehensive view of Wilson's art—lately opened at the Birmingham Art Gallery—certainly establishes his affinity with Claude, Poussin, Cuyp and others whose work is also represented; but more important still, it reveals him clearly as the great precursor of Turner and Constable.



Birthday Treat

MUMMY! Mummy, have you noticed me *rushing in and out*, borrowing things? Well, I mean have you noticed me doing it *more than usual*? Mummy, have you got any old cracked cups or old pins or anything you don't want? Do you mean you want *all* the cups, even if they're cracked? Haven't you got *anything* you don't want, like string or anything—and, oh, Mummy, have you seen that whistle, the one Auntie Mag gave us, the one you said what a thing to choose? Have you seen it anywhere? Mummy, it's for a *smash-and-grab*, but the other things were to sell. On a stall. Well, to Christopher, perhaps, or we thought you might buy a few, or Mrs. Nottingham.

Mrs. Nottingham—she's the lady who lives at the conker house who gave me some in a teeny basket without a handle and to-day is her birthday and we didn't even know she was *called* Mrs. Nottingham until she gave Hilary back our ball three times when it bounced into her garden and the third time only because it was her birthday to-day and she said not any more, birthday or not.

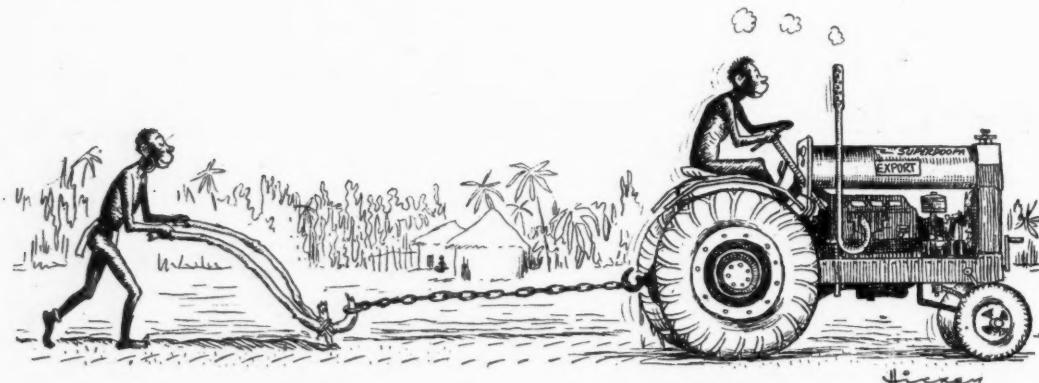
Mummy, we said Many happy returns, and Hilary said had she had a nice lot of presents and she said she'd had two letters. Mummy, only *two letters*! So I said was she going to have a party and she said no, she was going out to lunch. So when we told Martin and Christopher what a horrible birthday Mrs. Nottingham was having

Christopher said it was lucky he'd found her back gate opened so easily because it's just by the hole in their fence, and it was lucky for her it was a Saturday, because now we could get through when she was out and give her a tremendous surprise for her birthday.

Mummy, could you come and be a policeman in about half an hour—I should think she'd have come back from having lunch by then—or perhaps in about an hour, for the *smash-and-grab*? Mummy, what it is—it's a *fair*. Well, Mummy, *on her lawn*: how would it be a surprise if it was somewhere else and she couldn't even see it? Christopher hung the darts board on a tree and it's five goes for twopence, and whoever gets the hugest score will have a splendid prize, but we haven't thought yet what it can be. Martin has the *stall*, Mummy, that's why we wanted some old cracked cups or something because he's only got bundles of firewood to sell so far: we made them out of twigs and things that were under the trees. Mummy, would sevenpence a pound be enough for firewood, do you think? Hilary has made a birthday-card. She won't let anyone see it. She's wrapped it up and hung it on a bush, so that it's a treasure hunt. Mummy, I have the best thing: it was my idea, it's much the best idea. It's *fishing for nails*. Well, first you have a step-ladder, then you have a bucket of water in the middle under it, with a lot of nails at the bottom, then you have a magnet

on the end of a string. Then you have to climb up to the top step but one and lean over the top and fish down under the steps for the nails. Mummy, do you think a penny for three tries would be enough?

Mummy, why aren't you *pleased*? Mrs. Nottingham is going to have a lovely surprise? Mummy, it is a lovely surprise; anybody would be surprised, *why wouldn't she like it*? Why wouldn't anybody like a lovely fair on their lawn on their birthday, and coming home from a lunch *not knowing* and to find it had sort of *grown up* when they were away? Mummy, what we thought was, when she'd done all the fishing and everything and was wondering what she could do next, suddenly we would have the *smash-and-grab*. "Stick-'em-up, stick-'em-up, stick-'em-up!" Like this, with the water-pistol. Mummy, it's Christopher and me, and we're going to take all Martin's money he's got on his stall from the firewood, and Hilary's going to blow the whistle, and when she's blown it, could you come in and be a policeman and take us off to prison, Mummy, could you? Mummy, what do you *mean*, you can't be a *party to*? It's a *fair* because she *didn't have* a party, and Mummy, we can't find the whistle, and everything will be spoilt if we can't find it. Mummy, could you *think* where it is? Mummy, *why* don't you want Mrs. Nottingham to have a lovely birthday surprise, why don't you?



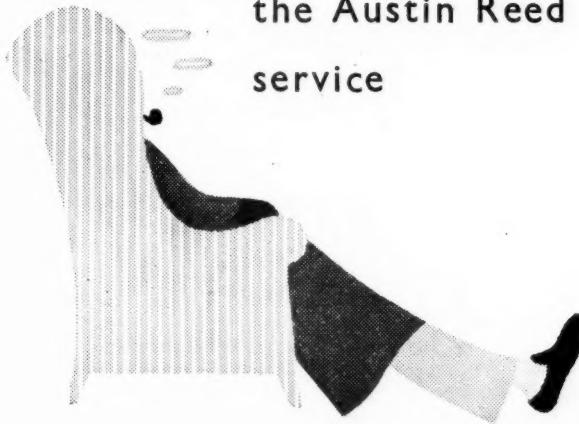
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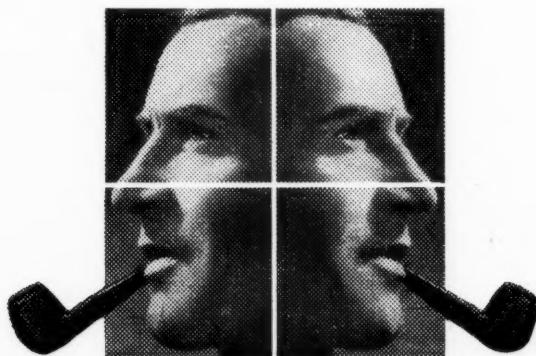
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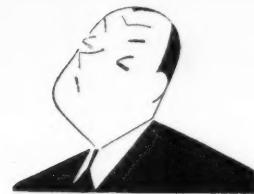
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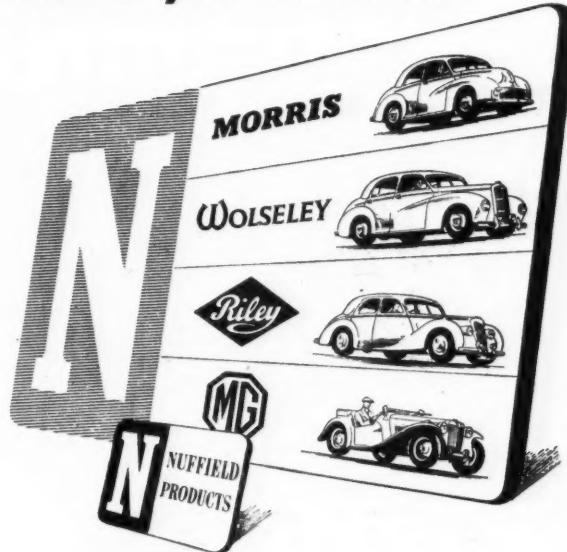
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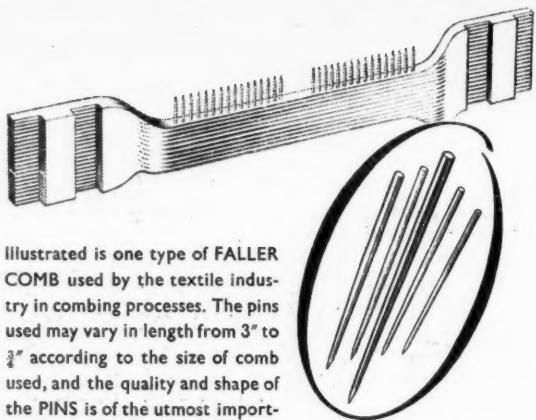
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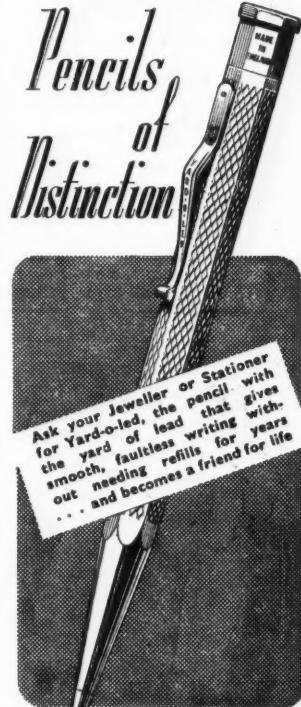
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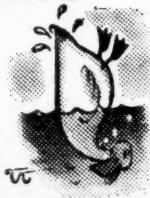
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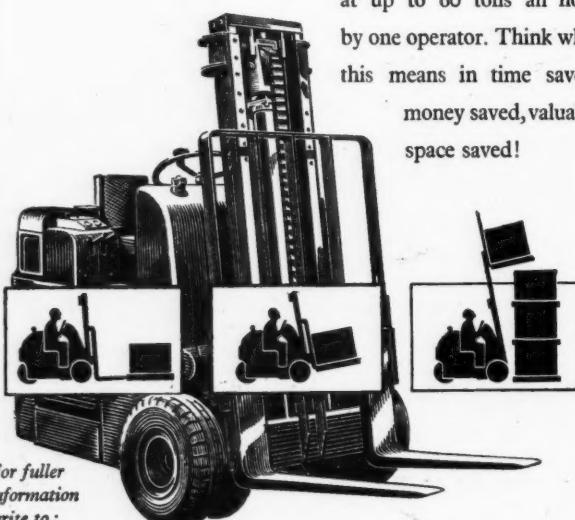
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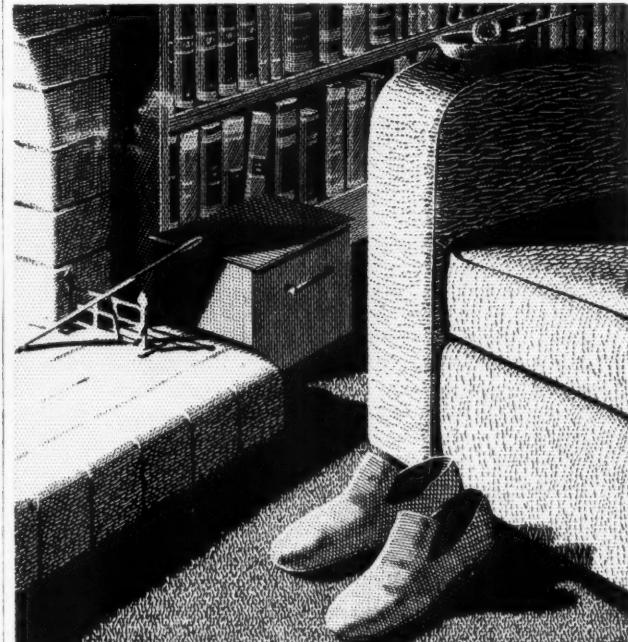
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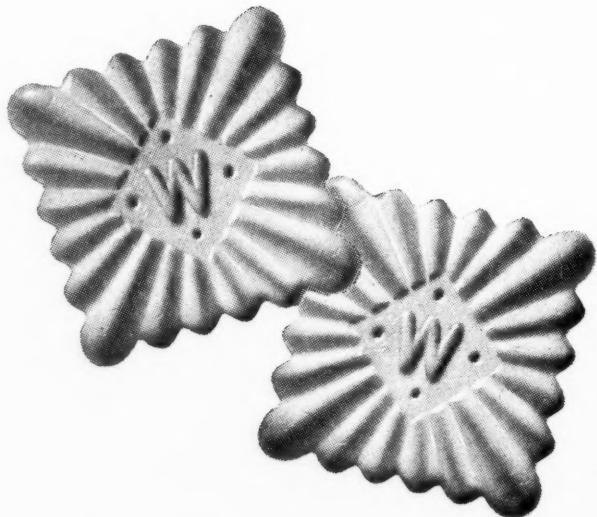
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Weston's Dainty Fare



Such beguiling little biscuits! Their name aptly describes their nature, and anyone who can resist them must be very strong-minded indeed. Weston's Dainty Fare are not really plentiful yet, but they who ask are most likely to receive.

Weston's

BISCUITS